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ET PAPERS

A. Wellington Wolet

American Literature – Misc.

THE WOOLET PAPERS

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Woolet

A. WELLINGTON WOOLET

THE WOOLET PAPERS

BY

A. Wellington Woolet.

TRADE-MARK RECORD
PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK LONDON
1899

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FOREWORD.

MR. WOOLET IS INTRODUCED TO THE READER.

In editing these papers, it is deemed proper to introduce to the reader, the author, A. Wellington Woolet, Esquire, that eminent merchant, who has been, according to his lights, and in his own estimation, a profound observer of men and measures in the world.

Mr. Woolet appears to me to be something of a philospher, but a very simple one.

He is in turn shrewd, calculating and observing; at other times, he appears to be very simple, childlike and easily gulled; but at all times and under all circumstances, Mr. Woolet is an American gentleman.

Mr. Woolet once told me, in a moment of confidence, that the sublimest passage he ever read in any book outside of the Bible, was in Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, as follows:

"Love each other dearly always. There is scarcely anything else in the world but that; to love one another."

Said Mr. Woolet, continuing, "I courted and won the charming Mrs. Woolet. I have reared my children. I have labored in the Sabbath School of my church. I have maintained my business relations and performed my social duties, always actuated by the principles of love contained in Victor Hugo's glorious declaration.

Life is full of burdens and weariness. We meet with much duplicity, chicanery and deceit in our travels. Our fellow-travelers are not always honest, savory, cheerful or attractive to us.

But above and beyond all things tainted with human weakness and earthly error, are the glorious qualities of humanity, fellowship and love, which being divinely conceived, shed a lustre of serene peacefulness and heavenly radiance upon the men and women of earth, and make life worth living, after all."

These appear to be Mr. Woolet's sentiments, and they certainly are most creditable.

Another good side of Mr. Woolet's nature seems to be the profound respect and admiration he professes for the charming Mrs. Woolet; conjugal devotion is one of the predominating traits of his character.

His son, Septimus, who has grown up to be quite a fine lad, and a fair specimen of the American collegian, has reached an age when he is always ready to debate questions with his father, and very often to the discomfiture of the latter.

The photograph of Mr. Woolet contained in this book, is a good one, and clearly shows, if a face counts for anything, that the amiable Mr. Woolet is somewhat of a dyspeptic, and rather disposed to look at matters over his glasses, than through them.

Mr. Woolet is a New York merchant, of good social standing, and as such, it is hoped that his stories, experiences and reflections may prove of some entertaining benefit to the reader, while stamping him as a writer of sentiment.

These papers have appeared, from time to time, in the Trade-Mark Record, and the favor therein extended to them, has suggested their publication in this permanent form.

Manhattan, December, 1899.

THE EDITOR.

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MR. WOOLET SUFFERS FROM A BOYCOTT.

I am a Woolet. A genuine Woolet. In other words, a human sheep, and I sometimes wish that I had been born a little lamb, with no mission in life but to bleat and baa for a brief period, and then to have my succulent little chops served up with fresh green peas and tomato sauce. My troubles would then be but few in number and soon ended.

I flatter myself that I possess a kind, tender heart and a friendly disposition—that the milk of human kindness is not soured in my breast, and that I have within me traits of character which are not exactly fiendlike or hoggish. I have been a merchant for many years, and believe that I command the respect of my fellow merchants, as I possess the confidence of my bank, and a good rating in the Mercantile Agency. I have, as a manufacturer, employed many workmen, and in all the long years I have acted as their employer, I have always endeavored to be kind, fair and just to my work people.

And now that I have been "Boycotted," denounced as a tyrant by Labor Unions— condemned to death by Anarchists, advertised generally as an oppressor of Labor, and a person unfit to live in a civilized community, I feel hurt and somewhat disgusted. I begin to reach the conclusion that I have humored my people too much— that I have treated them too kindly, and have dealt too leniently with them. For the boycott they have put upon me I care nothing; but the principle involved is dear to me, and I will never surrender principle so long as I live.

To prove how kindly I have acted towards my work people, I will only say that they are paid the highest rate of wages earned by any workmen in our line of business. I reduced their hours of work to seven hours a day without reducing their pay.

Then they struck for a Saturday half-holiday, which I granted; but they resisted any reduction of pay for the holiday. I acceded to this.

Then they wanted the shop made a union shop, which I agreed to. Then they wanted all the non-union people discharged; I obligingly performed this duty. Then they wanted

the foreman discharged too; I yielded—anything for peace. Then they struck because the new foreman I engaged was a young man; I let him go. Then the next foreman didn't suit because he was a Swede; I relieved him. Then, when I got a foreman to suit them, they claimed that I ought to become a Knight of Labor. I told them to propose me. They did so. I was unanimously blackballed. I heard some talk of a strike because this happened, but it did not occur.

I have paid them the wages they have not earned, when absent on account of alleged sickness. I afterwards learned that they were off to picnics on the days in question. One fellow got drunk and cracked the head of a fellow-workman. The latter claimed damages from me, and they struck because I refused to pay.

After this breach was healed, they found fault with the machinery, until, with one thing or the other, I was nearly driven to distraction.

I have been too kind—altogether too kind. I have pensioned off a lot of old codgers who were so old that they spoiled all the work they handled. I even bought one of the old

women a set of false teeth. Could any employer do more ? The finest turkeys were distributed among them on Thanksgiving Day. In brief, in reviewing my treatment of these people, I cannot find a single act of omission or commission wherewith to reproach myself; and yet here I am "Boycotted," published in a paper which is ornamented with skulls, cross-bones, coffins and other cheerful and exhilarating devices.

And why ? Well, I will tell you.

The Tribune employs non-union compositors. R. U. Crazy & Company advertise in the Tribune. Mrs. Woolet was seen purchasing a few spools of cotton, some pins and several pieces of braid at Crazy & Company's store one day last week. That settled it. The fact was reported at a meeting of the union, who sent a committee of my shopworkmen to request me to sign a paper binding Mrs. Woolet and every member of my family, including an aged aunt who has been bed-ridden for thirty years, not to deal with R. U. Crazy & Company, so long as they advertised in the Tribune. I read the paper over carefully, and then handed it back to the committee with these remarks:

"Gentlemen, you evidently do not know Mrs. Woolet, or you would not ask me to sign such a paper. Mrs. Woolet, gentlemen, is a woman. Yes, gentlemen, strange and paradoxical as it may appear to you, it is nevertheless true, Mrs. Woolet is a woman —an American woman; and, gentlemen, in making this statment of this fact to you, you must readily understand that, inasmuch as Mrs. Woolet is a woman—and an American woman at that—any paper of this character which I might sign would not alone be disregarded by her, but, in addition, she would make it the especial business of her existence to trade with this firm all the more extensively. I cannot control this thing. I cannot yield. Perhaps you may come to me next week and order me to procure a divorce from Mrs. Woolet, or poison a few of my children. My mother-in-law, gentlemen, is at your service. The sacrifice is great, but the cause of labor is greater—take my mother-in-law. She is old and somewhat tough; do with her as ye deem best. But I draw the line at Mrs. Woolet and the children. I strike in turn, and wish you a very good day."

The shop went out on strike, and I am "Boycotted." Mrs. Woolet applauded my course, and I am in this regard happy.

But, on the other hand, I feel injured and hurt that I should have the ban laid upon me for this cause, and I repeat again, would I were a lamb or a donkey—or anything but a manufacturing Woolet.

MR. WOOLET TRIES TO BUILD A HOUSE.

Mrs. Woolet, who has charge of the domestic arrangements of our interesting family, having long—yea, for many years—complained of the want of comfort found in modern city houses, induced me finally to determine to build a house which would satisfy her tastes and gratify her desires.

I was the more readily induced to cater to this wish on the part of Mrs. Woolet, after reading in some classical work, that, according to an ancient proverb, every man should attain three things in his lifetime, namely: he should build a house; he should have a wife; he should have a son. I have a wife; I have a son; I determined to build a house.

After much searching, I found a suitable site, which I purchased, and then, upon the recommendation of a good friend, called on Messrs. Dimly and Dumly, the eminent architects, and requested them to call at my house, at their early convenience, in order to gain an insight into my wife's mind on the

important subject in question, preparatory to drawing the plans for the Woolet home.

Dimly promised to come, but sent Dumly in his place instead.

Mrs. Woolet, who had kept me awake for many nights, in her eloquent and profuse descriptions of the kind of a house she would like to occupy, became tongue-tied in the presence of Dumly, who was a big, fat, beefy red-faced man, weighing fully two hundred pounds. Dumly inquired if we wanted a mansion, villa, or Old English inn style of architecture, built either in ultra-marine, sesquepedalian, or Alhambra fashion.

Mrs. Woolet faintly replied that she wanted lots of closet and cupboard room on each floor. Dumly said that was a matter of detail. He referred to the exterior design. Receiving no reply from Mrs. Woolet, he inquired of me whether we desired architraves, oriole windows, flying buttresses, and Ionic columns on the front elevation. I said I was not very particular, so long as the design was chaste and looked well. Dumly said to leave that to him, and we did.

"Of course," said he, "we would have the interior finished with hard wood, and some

marble and onyx work." He looked at Mrs. Woolet, and she murmured something about closets. Finally, Dumly said he would draw the plans and submit them. He then took his leave, and had no sooner departed than womanlike, Mrs. Woolet, knowing it all, opened the floodgates of her speech, and for two long hours entertained me with her views and ideas as to what she wanted, and more especially as to what she did not want.

About three weeks thereafter I received a message from Dumly that the plans were ready, and that he would be pleased to call that evening at my house to submit them. He called. He brought with him a large, long, heavy, thick roll of muslin-backed papers, which he called the plans. He also produced a correspondingly thick set of legal-looking documents, which he called the specifications. He first of all showed us the plan for the front elevation of the house, as he called it.

Mrs. Woolet glanced at it and gave a slight scream of joy. I looked at it, and my heart fell into my right congress gaiter, with a dull and sickening thud.

A mist spread over my eyes, through which

slowly arose Dumly, smiling and perspiring; his fat, red forefinger pointing in triumph to the plan. When I recovered control of my faculties sufficiently to enable me to examine the front elevation, I saw that Dumly had arranged to house my innocent family and me in a mansion which would contain King Solomon and his three hundred wives, nine hundred concubines, not to mention the children and help. It seemed to be about eleven stories high and four hundred feet wide. There was a majestic entrance, with arches, and columns, and carved lions, and monkeys, and griffins all over it; there were little balconies, and what looked like a series of fire escapes twisted out of shape by a Wiggins earthquake; there were bay-windows, and bow-windows, and dormer-windows, and a mansard roof in the middle, and a few carved chimneys on the front wall, and flying buttresses, and round windows; and then came terraces, and little spires, and minarets, and Moorish arches, and the whole topped by an octagon-shaped tower, with a Venetian mast springing out of it. It was an architectural nightmare. It was too horrible to be hideous. It was too infernally grotesque to be ugly.

It possessed a satanic individuality, unique, unequalled, unheard of—a perfect phantasm of insane incongruity. I looked at Dumly. His face was beaming brightly. He looked upon the plan with the same fond admiration with which Sycorax must have regarded Caliban. I asked Dumly whether he or Dimly had made this plan. He said it was all his own. I timidly asked him what style of architecture he would call this. He said it was the Manhattan Composite Renaissance.

Believing that we had sufficiently gorged ourselves on the exterior, he unrolled the interior plans and volubly explained them. Here was the grand staircase; here was the drawing room; here were the reception rooms; here was the music room; there was the library; yonder the smoking room; there the grand parlor and conservatory, and upstairs more reception rooms, bed rooms, single and *en suite*; the bath rooms, the lavatories, the manicurios, the tonsorium, and the massage room; still further up, the billiard room, the card rooms, the wine room, connected with the art gallery; the dormitories, the gymnasium, etc. When he had concluded, Mrs. Woolet inquired for the

closets, whereat Dumly grew purple in the face, and stammered out something about closets being unfashionable—and so unhealthy—so stuffy, as it were. I cut the discussion short by asking Dumly what the probable cost of such a mansion would be. He replied about two hundred thousand dollars, perhaps fifty thousand or so more, it would depend on the trim and material. I asked him if the house in question could be built on a twenty-five foot lot. He seemed startled, and said he had understood Dimly to tell him that I had a hundred feet square. I got warm, and said Dimly was an ass. Dumly acquiesced in this. I then said that what I wanted was a three-story plain brick house, to cost about ten thousand dollars. Dumly turned yellow in the face, and smiled a sort of ghastly smile. He said that there must be some mistake. Dimly & Dumly never drew plans for any structure which would cost less than one hundred thousand dollars. Their reputation would not permit it. I said that settled it. My wife mustered up sufficient courage to say that any architect who would plan a house without providing closets was no good.

Whereat, Mr. Dumly, rolling up his papers, said he was sorry that closets had gone out, and his clientelle being of the best, he would not argue with persons who evidently did not visit in the higher circles. He left us.

On the following morning I received the following bill:

"New York, Nov. 5, 1886.

"A. Woolet, Esq.,

"To Messrs. Dimly & Dumly, Dr.,

"Architects.

"To preparing plans and specifications for dwelling house $500.00

"Received Payment."

I am a Woolet, but I will rather submit to the clutches of the legal gentlemen than pay this piece of ———. On reflection, I opened negotiations with Dimly. I settled the matter for three hundred dollars.

My wife and I have concluded to sell the lot I purchased and not to build a house, but to buy one ready made. We can build in the closets afterward; but I'll have a stonemason boss the job.

MR. WOOLET HIRES A MASCOT.

Business has been bad with Woolet & Co. lately, and things have sort of gone awry. No cohesive ductility about trade, as it were. So, on consulting with a friend of mine the other day, he advised me to hire a Mascot, and change my luck.

"Woolet," said he, "I am not superstitious; I will sit down with thirteen other men at a table, and eat or drink any day. I will kiss a cross-eyed woman, and I will pass Trinity Church-yard at any hour of the day or evening without whistling. But for all that I am convinced that a Mascot is a handy article to have around a man's place."

I listened to my brave friend, and asked him how a comic opera would or could or might be apt to help a business man ?

"Bosh," replied my friend. "It is not the comic opera; it is the Mascot; the lucky person; the angel of good fortune, who brings good luck wherever he, she or it goes."

I asked my friend what experience he had with Mascots ?

Whereupon he replied: "Business was very bad with us, Woolet, last year. Our collections were slow and we couldn't meet our payments. We got hold of a Mascot. The moment we rubbed up against him, as if by magic, our credit was restored, and, ahem, we settled for forty cents. Yes, sir, he got us through without the least trouble, at forty cents on the dollar."

I meekly stated that we did not need that kind of a Mascot, as we paid cash for all we bought.

"Well," continued he glowing with enthusiasm, "there was Baggs, Raggs & Co., the eminent shoe manufacturers; always had strikes, trouble with their help. Oh ! lots and lots of trouble till they hired a Mascot. Had to pay him big wages, but he helped 'em, I tell you. No more trouble after he got there, I tell you. Sure thing, every time."

He half pesuaded me, but I asked him who was this wonderful Mascot Baggs, Raggs & Co., had used with such gratifying success ?

"Why, the President of the Shoemakers' Union," replied my non-superstitious friend. His Mascot had been a smart lawyer, he said, which did not surprise me.

He kept on telling me how hotels, theatres, baseball clubs, even preachers—all had Mascots, and believed in them. How one of the leading dailies had run up the circulation of its wants from a paltry 47 in number to 99,887,956,354 per day by having a Mascot—and more of the same sort—around. I finally promised him that if he sent me a real, genuine, live Mascot, I would give he, she or it a fair trial.

A few days after such conversation a sleek, well-dressed young man appeared with a letter of introduction from my friend.

I gazed with some curiosity upon the bearer of the document in question.

"So you are a Mascot ?" said I.

"Yes, sir," modestly replied he.

"Are you a professional or an amateur ?" inquired I.

"I am a professional," proudly answered he.

"Have you any references ?" asked I.

"Lots," replied he. "I have one from Dave McAdam, President of the Thirteen Club. I am their Mascot."

"Strange," said I, "for I imagined the Thirteen Club was opposed to superstition."

"Why, sir," vigorously said he, "the Mascot business ain't no superstition. Its a regular business. All my family are Mascots, and in the business."

I told him I would hire him for a week on trial.

At the end of the week—a week of trial indeed, I discharged him. I was loath to do it, but necessity compelled me.

I may say, without exaggeration, that this particular week was the unluckiest week of my whole life.

The first night when I got home, I found my mother-in-law had come in town to pay me a three months' visit.

The hired girl quarreled with her the very next day and left, and Mrs. Woolet was without help for a month.

The porter closed the store, letting the water run on the top floor, and next morning one-third of the stock was found swimming and ruined.

The paying-teller of my bank made a mistake and allowed one of our notes to go to protest, when we had a balance six times as large standing to our credit there.

One of our heaviest debtors failed and con-

fessed judgments enough to wipe us and the rest of his merchandise creditors out of sight.

Our baby swallowed some buttons, and nearly died under the heroic treatment administered by my mother-in-law before the doctor arrived.

I allowed my life insurance policy to lapse by failing to pay the premium when due, and nearly forfeited all the money I had paid in.

We got six countermands for large orders, yielding a snug profit, which had been placed the week before.

I was drawn on the jury, subpoenaed as a witness, and sued for violation of a corporation ordinance for not cleaning off the snow in front of my house in the winter of 1885.

I discharged the Mascot. My hair was turning white, and I was getting superstitious.

The day he left me, my mother-in-law was telegraphed for, and also left, and things resumed their normal condition.

I related my sad experience to my friend who had recommended this Mascot to me, and he said: "Woolet, its the funniest thing in the world, but a horrible mistake occurred

in your case. You see this family of Mascots have one Worrier among them."

"What's a Worrier ?" asked I.

"Why, a man who worries for you at so much a day—takes all care off your mind."

"Well ?" queried I.

"Well," said he, "they sent you the Worrier instead of the Mascot."

"And he came to me," faltered I, "chock full of all the cares, burdens and troubles of his employers."

"Yes," said he.

"Well," finally said I, drawing a long breath, "I am very much obliged to you;" and all that he said was: "You're very welcome."

THE WOOLET FAMILY AT HOME.

MR. WOOLET HAS A QUEER ADVENTURE.

I am a peaceable citizen.

I try to do my duty as a husband, a father, and a Christian gentleman.

I detest hypocrisy and sham. I am inclined to be charitable and humane.

Why the Fates should, therefore, single me out for sportive play, I cannot imagine.

I had a horrible adventure the other day, and I feel that life is hardly worth living.

When you hear the story, you will understand and appreciate my situation.

Business detained me out late the other night, and as I was crossing that great throbbing artery of human night travel, the Bowery, a well-dressed young woman accosted me, and stating that she was a stranger in New York, asked to be directed to Broadway. As I was going towards Broadway myself, I pointed out the direction to her, and did not consider it strange at the time that she kept walking by my side.

We had not proceeded very far when, to

my utter astonishment, she said she felt faint, and before I well knew what was happening, she spun around on her heels, and I had her in my arms.

No sooner did I hold her secure from falling, than she gave vent to a shriek which would have put an ordinary steam-tug whistle to shame, and before I had a chance to collect my senses we were the centre of a mob of people, among whom was a policeman.

It all seems a horrid nightmare to me now, but this viper, whom I had with chivalry and courtesy befriended, accused me—yes me—of having assaulted her; and, presto, I was marched off to the station-house.

How I passed the night, and why I did not then and there lose my senses, I know not.

In the morning I was arraigned in court, and the black-mailing lawyer who represented the woman, had the judge remand me for another day, on the plea that his client was too ill to appear in court. Realizing my position, my awful position, as I was being taken back to the station house, I sent for this lawyer, and after negotiating the whole day, I finally secured my release that evening.

I was no sooner a free man than I appre-

ciated the fact that, in order to keep my misadventure secret, I had not alone given a fictitious name in court, but had refrained from communicating with my family or partner. When I reached home I was accorded a reception that surprised me.

My wife fainted, and recovered to go into hysterics; my children howled, and my partner swore. The house was full of detectives, likewise the coroner.

I found that a general alarm had been sent out from police headquarters, that all the hospitals had been visited, and that my description had been telegraphed all over the country.

A tramp who had been washed ashore dead, and laid out at the Morgue, had been positively identified by one of my friends as A. Wellington Woolet. Sixteen mourning goods dealers had sent clerks with samples of mourning goods to Mrs. Woolet; not to mention a dozen florists, several patent casket manufacturers, three embalmers, as well as a Philadelphia obituary poet, who had called in person.

My grief reached its apex, however, when I read this laconic paragraph in the Evening

Gun—Baseball Edition—of the previous night:

"Sloped With a Blonde.

"A hitherto respected citizen and merchant, A. W. Woolet, of Woolet & Company, and whose mysterious disappearance was reported at police headquarers last night, is found to have sailed for Europe this morning on the steamer Etruscania with a fair blonde companion. Mr. Woolet leaves a worthy family, a circle of church acquaintances, and a host of creditors to mourn his absence."

I'm down on law, but if I don't go into a first-class libel suit, then I deserve to show another lone female from the country, the road to Broadway at 11:15 p. m.

MR. WOOLET SEES SOME FRIENDS OFF.

Europe must be a great place. It undoubtedly is a collection of countries possessing very many attractions. And especially for Americans.

It is the fad now-a-days to go to Europe.

I don't know what Europe would do without America.

We send all our rich people out to Europe to spend their money there, and Europe kindly in return, sends us a good and assorted stock of impecunious noblemen, yellow-haired burlesquers, nihilists, communists, *lazzaroni*, paupers, etc. She also sends us some fine, brawny, industrious people.

We are thankful for the latter; we could dispense with the former.

These and kindred thoughts filled my mind as I took Mrs. Woolet down to the great ocean steamer, The City of Home, to see our friends the Biggs, or, as Mrs. Woolet calls them, the Biggsesses, off for Europe.

Biggs, Senior, made a pile in Coffee last

spring—a big pile, and so he took his family to Europe, to spend some of it. Mrs. Biggs, and Miss Martha Biggs, and Master Timothy Biggs, and little Miss Felicie Biggs, and her Bunney, or nurse, go with him

We gaze upon the Biggs family, as they stand on the steamer's deck, and are lost in admiration.

Some one has told Master Biggs, who is aged 19 years, that sea-sickness could be avoided by filling up with brandy before the start; Master Biggs, I grieve to say had accepted the recipe, and was very full.

What made us stare, however, were the costumes adopted by the Biggs family.

Biggs was arrayed in a big wash-bowl helmet, which completely hid his face. He had on a peajacket, and trousers made of a large pattern of plaid material, and slung across his shoulders was a pair of huge marine glasses in a case. Mrs. Biggs, who, ahem—well, is rather an aged and plain looking person, wore a jaunty sailor hat, a new set of teeth, a traveling costume which had about seven capes, one flapping over the other, and puffed up sleeves which made her look like *Quasimodo.* She also wore all her diamond jewelry. The

rest of the family were dressed to match.

Biggs was full of bustle and importance. He persisted in getting in everybody's way; in tripping over ropes; and wound up his performance by nearly falling down the main-hatch, into which they were lowering luggage.

Before the steamer left the dock, Biggs took us down to his state-room, where in defiance of ship's rules, he opened several bottles of champagne, which Master Timothy Biggs patronized to so great an extent that he was led away suffering from a spell of unnatural sea-sickness, which gave certain promise of future joys to come when the heaving billows of ocean would get in their fine work on him.

Biggs showed me a large number of floral tributes set out in the main saloon, sent to him and his wife by admiring friends, as he said. Huge anchors, steamers, etc.—and one was quite a monument of immortelles and white lilies which was evidently gotten up with mortuary tendencies.

On turning over a tag on the bottom of this mourning emblem, I was horrified to read: "Seven pieces ordered by Mr. Biggs

to be sent to steamer City of Home to-morrow, sure. Paid." The tag had been forgotten, and Biggs' humbug and display were thus unmasked.

We bade the Biggs,' big and little, excepting Timothy, who had for sufficient reasons disappeared from sight, good-bye, and as the majestic vessel sailed down the bay, I felt a sort of shame that another set of "rich" Americans, represening this country, were going to Europe to spend their money foolishly; to make a laughing stock of themselves; to reflect ridicule upon our people, and to come back snobbish, priggish, haughty and "yurrupfied."

MR. WOOLET ASSUMES THE ROLE OF SOLOMON.

Parables are good things.

And so are Proverbs.

In the course of my experience I have found the following to be true and worth remembering:

1. The cards beat the maker.

2. The chicks always believe themselves to be smarter than the hens.

3. Whenever a lawyer advises you to sue, go home and chew over it. Whenever he advises you not to sue, jump at his advice and take it without further reflection.

4. First impressions are good, but the last impressions are usually the most reliable ones.

5. Never interfere between husband and wife.

6. Never take or give tips or points.

7. Never buy what you have no use for.

8. Your stomach is your best and most useful servant. Don't abuse it.

8. Don't be ashamed of old clothes, if they are clean and have been paid for.

10. Even some truly good people eat with their knives.

11. One enemy can harm you more than ten friends can repair.

12. One can always afford to be charitable.

13. A rich man without friends is a very poor man.

14. Act as your own executor. It will save a heap of trouble for your heirs.

15. It is easier for a father to support his ten children, than it is for the ten children to support the one father.

16. It is sometimes very hard to say No; but the man who has learned to say it at the proper time, is on the high road to success.

17. Never wear out your welcome. Many an invitation is extended, accompanied with the silent wish that it may be declined.

18. A red nose is not always the sign of tippling. Nor is a bald head always an indication of wisdom.

19. From 15 to 21 the years lag. From 21 to 30, they halt. After 30 they fly.

20. Never bite off more than you can conveniently masticate.

21. Opportunity makes larceny every time.

22. When you see your book-keeper driving fast horses "loaned to him by a friend," then it is just about time to examine your cash account.

23. Always give yourself the benefit of a doubt.

24. Don't swap off old friends for new ones.

25. Help your neighbor up; don't give him a push when you find him going down the hill.

26. Never write a letter when in anger.

27. The man who holds the mortgage owns your house.

28. Never fail to be ahead of time in keeping appointments.

29. The man who is lonesome in his own company, is poor company for other people.

30. The advice of a wife is very often worth heeding. If you have no wife, get one.

MR. WOOLET'S NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.

I am a great man for forming good resolutions.

I know a great many other people just like me.

I wish that I were equally as good in keeping them.

I have a goodly crowd of men to keep me company.

The other night (it was New Year's eve,) I told Mrs. Woolet that I had determined to turn over several new leaves in my book of life, and asked her comfort, aid and encouragement in enabling me to keep several new resolutions of importance I had determined to keep during the coming year.

Mrs. Woolet had heard me pipe this same tune on previous New Year's Eve's, and so she smiled a sort of Bob Ingersol skeptic-kind-of-a-lets-see-what-you're - up - to - now-smile, and bade me proceed.

I unpacked my stock of resolutions and exhibited the following choice variety to her.

I firstly declared that "we must economize. We had been spending too much money during the past year. Times were not as flush as they used to be, and money was not so easily made," etc. Mrs. Woolet signified her assent, and requested me to enumerate the mode and direction in which I proposed to save money during the coming year. This she did with a sweet smile of encouragement, which I rewarded with a chaste osculatory salute.

I said, "I thought she could get along with less house-money per week." The smile left her beautiful brow and she became quite serious looking.

I proceeded to say, that "I thought fewer dresses were in order—"

She did not smile again.

I added that "her milliner's bills had been frightful."

Mrs. Woolet is a charming brunette, but I don't remember ever having seen her look quite so dark before. I casually mentioned also that "the coal and gas bills were larger than need be."

That settled it—

Mrs. Woolet in a voice of icy coldness,

which gave me a congestive chill, blandly asked me, "why I did not strangle her and poison the children ?" I lifed my hand in deprecation of this sanguinary remark, but she politely requested me to keep quiet. "I had had my say, and she would have hers."

"A wife and children," she continued, "were evidently a burdensome expense to me, and as I desired to economize by starving and freezing them, letting them go around unclad, and have them pass their evenings in total darkness, the most direct way of saving all expenses in these directions would be to get rid of them at once." I attempted to argue with her, but she continued in a louder key, "She had remarked with pain and sorrow that I no longer felt that attachment for our home that a good husband and a conscientious father should, could or would feel, that I was a selfish brute, unfit to—" and here Mrs. Woolet burst into a flood of tears sufficient to float the ark.

I can stand any amount of talk, but tears are woman's deadliest weapons. The bravest man is fain to beat a hasty retreat at the sight of them.

My resolutions—my good resolutions,

alas ! were expunged—wiped out and removed from sight by those saline drops.

It took a great amount of argument to convince her that I had only been joking; I had to protest that she was the most economical wife any man ever was blessed with. That I was a brute and other things equally bad.

Gradually her tears ceased falling, and her smiles began to break forth again like the sun after an April shower.

And so, she told me of the many bargains to be found in the large shops after the holidays. How the goods were marked down so low, that it was sinful—an actual flying in the face of Providence to let such bargains escape, and I began the New Year, with a promise, obtained from me under the duress of woman's tears, to hand over a goodly sized cheque to be invested by Mrs. Woolet in bargains.

And thus it is that we start the New Year with economy and good intentions.

And the road to the New York shops is like a certain other place, well paved, with a solid macadamized pavement of good intentions.

MR. WOOLET BECOMES AN ASSIGNEE.

I have directed the maid-of-all-work at my house not to throw away the ashes in the ash-can.

I am going to purchase some good, durable sackcloth.

I will go home and array myself in a complete suit of sackcloth, and I will sit down in a large heap of ashes—the larger the better.

I will even strew some on my head.

If the ashes are hot so much the better. Heaping coals of fire upon my head would be but poetic justice—a fit sequence to my being burnt.

I will seclude myself from the world, and become a misanthrope or a theosophist, or something, I don't care what.

You ask why this turgid, mournful sombreness of my reflections ? I will state the case.

Some six weeks ago a person, whose name I detest so much, that I will not sully the comparative purity of this ink by recording

it, called at my office. I had hitherto believed him to be a friend of mine.

"Woolet," said he, "I am in dire trouble; I am in deep distress."

And then this person began to wring his hands (I could now wring his neck), and shed any quantity of briny tears of a crocodile nature. I am naturally, as I have often stated, of a confiding, sympathetic nature, and I was prepared to open my checque-book, and accommodate him with any financial aid he needed, and I so informed him.

He thanked me. "But," said he, "it is too late; I am a ruined, disgraced man; I cannot accept your proffered aid—it would be robbery were I to do so." How my heart warmed to him after this apparently honest refusal I need not say.

I told him I would assist him in any way I could, and asked him to tell me how I could serve him.

This person then stated that he was so hopelessly embarrassed that he was compelled to make an assignment. I was the only person on whom he could rely. He was about to confer upon me the proud honor of making me his assignee. I was somewhat

overcome at this contemplated act of friendship. I told him that I had absolutely no experience in such a position of trust; that I was afraid I would not be able to do the matter justice. He kept on crying, and assured me that it was only a matter of form, that his lawyer would do all the work, that my time would not be trespassed upon, and, by dint of tears and fair promises, he overcame my scruples, and I consented.

We went to his lawyer's office, where I found that the instrument had already been drawn, and, after the insertion of my name in the precious document, this person and myself signed and acknowledged it.

The lawyer then told me to go home and not worry about it; he would attend to everything.

I went home. For six hours thereafter I attended to my own affairs and did not worry about it.

After that, and since that time, I have not attended to my own affairs, but I have attended to this assignment, and I have worried considerably about it.

The first shot was fired at me when I was required to furnish bonds for some sixty

thousand dollars. This person's lawyer, whom I will call Mephistopheles, told me that this was but a matter of form, so I furnished them.

Then one of the creditors called on me with his lawyer, and demanded the return of a large lot of goods the person had purchased but two days before making the assignment, and, when I professed ignorance about the matter, he told me—yes, me, in my own office—that, while he knew my friend—my friend, ha ! ha !—the assignor, to be a scoundrel, he knew me—yes, me—to be a thief. A thief ! I got so hysterical at this that I moved upon him to defend my honor even to the extent of using force, but he rushed out of the office and a little while thereafter he began a replevin suit—I believe Mephistopheles called it—against me; I have since learned that he never recovered any of his goods, which is a matter of some satisfaction to me.

And then more creditors came to me, and demanded their goods, and bullied me, and shook their fists in my face and called me harsh names. And then the lawyers—bless them ! may they increase and multiply and

enjoy themselves, and wax fat and have a good time while on earth—I know their future fate—the lawyers descended upon me in a swarm, like a plague of locusts, and they demanded the books, and they hauled me into court, and they examined me, and, when I could not answer their questions concerning this person's affairs, they hauled me up before the judge, who threatened to lock me up in jail for contempt of court if I did not answer, until I came as near being a lunatic as any man can.

And then more suits were commenced, and Mephistopheles got retainers and counsel fees from me, and then the validity of the assignment was tried, and for the first time I learned that the assignment contained the most diabolical preferences; that this person had preferred his wife, his brothers, his sisters, his uncles, his aunts, his cousins, his relatives—yea, unto the third and fourth generations, not forgetting some nephews, nieces, brothers-in-law, and even his wife's mother. He had provided for the whole crowd, and the assets had vanished into complete space.

The assignment, according to the evi-

dence, was honey-combed with fraud and saturated with perjury.

I was denounced by all the creditors and their counsel as the arch-knave, conspirator and infamous instrument of thieving. The Judge coincided with this view. It certainly looked that way to me—yes, to me, myself.

The assignment was set aside and I was ordered to account. I hadn't received anything to account for.

But I had to account all the same.

That person let me pay every cent of the money out of my own pocket, and whined about his misfortune in having made so unfortunate a selection of an assignee.

He told me he was ruined, when I knew that he had the whole "swag" in his possession.

That is, Mephistopheles got a slice, of course.

And so I got rid of this assignment.

Bereft of money, with my reputation stained, my nerves wrenched, with days and nights of trouble. I am worn out. I am a wreck ! And so I feel like going home and robing myself in good, stout sackcloth and sitting alone in a heap of warm ashes, to

meditate on the possible end of this person, and the future of Mephistopheles.

However, I have one satisfaction. The man who called me a thief in my own office has just made an assignment himself. I am going to try and buy up some of his paper, so I can go into his office and blackguard him a little in return; but this experience was so costly that I came near making an assignment myself.

MR. WOOLET IS CHARITABLE.

I am by nature charitable. My maternal grandmother was named Charity. My father was a deacon in the church and passed the plate. So charity runs in our family, and I have always contended that it softens the heart. Sometimes it softens the brain.

Promiscuous charity, however, is no good, and the incident I am about to relate will confirm this opinion. Charity should be organized. It should have its President, its Board of Directors, and a Secretary who is paid well.

It should have finely furnished offices. It should use costly stationery. It should have a corps of enterprising, skillful detectives to ferret out frauds and locate the deserving ones. Thus organized, charity will be well directed. Better that the Secretary and the detectives should skim the cream than the poor, intriguing frauds should get any.

But that is, after all, a mere matter of detail. As I started in to say, I am charitable. Last Summer, a villainous-looking fellow,

with closely cropped hair, stepped into my office, and taking off his cap, politely bowed, and in a most humble tone of voice, said:

"Sir, I am just out of Sing Sing State Prison, where I have been serving a term of five years for burglary. I have previously served time for grand larceny, highway robbery, forgery, and assault with a dirk knife. I have become weary of a life of crime. I desire to obtain honest employment, which I cannot expect to get until my hair grows. Will you assist me to remain honest ?"

I looked at the bad man and so admired his frankness; his rough, hardened face seemed so truthful, that I believed his statement, and giving him a dollar and some words of encouragement, bade him go and remain honest.

Last week the same man entered my office —not burglariously with a jimmy, but in daylight—and taking off the same cap, exposed a head of hair cropped closer to his skull than it was on the occasion of his previous visit over six months before.

"Sir," spake he, "I am just out of Sing Sing State Prison, where I have been serving a term of five years for burglary. I have pre-

viously served time for grand larceny, highway robbery, forgery and assault with a dirk knife. I have become weary of a life of crime. I desire to obtain honest employment, which I cannot expect to get until my hair has grown. Will you assist me to remain honest ?"

I gazed upon that head with curiosity.

Finally I said to this hardened liar: "You are just out of prison?" "Last week," replied he. "Where you have been for five years ?" "Yes, sir," said he. "Tell me," said I, "how do you keep your hair from growing ?"

"What do you mean ?" uneasily asked he.

"I mean," quoth I, "that your hair is just as short to-day as it was the last time you honored me with a visit." "Was I here before?" anxiously asked he. "You were," said I. "Excuse me boss," said he, and he slid out sideways, like a crab.

I will not be so promiscuously charitable in assisting pseudo-reformed convicts to keep honest in the future; but this example merely illustrates how nicely some people can live upon the community—like the lilies of the field, "who toil not, nor do they spin" yarns like this beggar with the short hair.

MR. WOOLET DISCUSSES A LIVE TOPIC.

I am sojourning at the seaside with Mrs. Woolet and our five little Woolets. That is to say, I sojourn there at night, and on Sundays.

The rest of the week is devoted to running for boats and trains at either end of the route.

I live on schedule time, and am, as I ought to be, very regular in my habits. However, I have many companions in my mis—my good fortune.

We compare notes going down to the Sea at night, and we read the papers and never look at each other in the mornings.

The other night I sat near the taffrail of the boat, looking up at the Goddess of Liberty, on Liberty Island, as we sailed by, when a tobacco dealer approached me and sat down by my side.

I asked him how business was.

He replied about as follows:

"The tobacco business has gone to Sheol—Sheol spelled with a big S.

There is nothing left to the business. There is no money in it—long credits—small margins—keen competition—I tell you, Woolet, it's the most counfoundedly, mean contemptible business I ever saw."

And having thus let off steam, he sauntered away.

Presently a leather merchant came along and as he looked so happy and contented, I asked him, as he sat down for a moment beside me, how business was.

In an instant his face became a thunder cloud.

"The leather business, Woolet, has gone to Hades—Hades spelled with an enormous capital H. There is nothing left to the confounded business—there isn't a cent in it—long credits—small profits—losses — over production—competition; I tell you it's got to be the meanest, nastiest and most contemptible business of any occupation in the country. Pah !"

And he walked away.

A little while thereafter a wholesale woolen goods merchant came by and sat down.

I coughed gently, and asked him how business was.

"Business ? Why, Woolet, where have you been living ?" asked he.

"Business ? Where is it ? What is it ? The woolen business you mean ? Why, it's vanished—gone—gone to the Devil. Why, we don't know anything about business. What with the tariff, and the Dingley Bill, and long credits, and dating bills six months ahead, and failures, and competition and no profits, why, confound it, the woolen business is the worst, the very worst occupation a man could be in. If I had my capital out of the confounded—why—" and here his feelings got the best of him and he left.

A stranger sat down beside me as we passed through the narrows. He had a prosperous, well-fed look, and he seemed very happy.

"Excuse me, sir," said I, "but may I enquire how business is with you at the present time ?"

"Excellent," replied he. "I am perfectly delighted with it. I am more than satisfied. It was never so good—and if it only continues this way I shall have every reason to be satisfied."

I gazed upon him in admiration, and with

some degree of hesitation, and asked him the nature of his business.

And he replied—

"I am a lawyer."

As he walked away, and I remembered that the courts were closed, and all law business suspended for the summer, I knew that besides being a lawyer, he was a professional liar, as well.

But later in the evening, I took the younger Woolets for a walk on Ocean avenue. The tobacco man, the leather man and the woolen man, each with his wife, passed us respectively, riding in his liveried turnout, and then the lawyer went by in a ten cent stage.

Such is life, and the kicker gets there every time.

MR. WOOLET ATTENDS A FASHIONABLE WEDDING.

I am not a "sassiety" man.

Nor do I count as one of McAllister's sturdy four hundred, who swing above the rest of us common mortals, in the cerulean spaces which canopy the terra firma of the American world of fashion.

But my friend de Snouques, by force of association with a fashionably inclined wife, is endeavoring to soar upwards.

I pity him, because his wings are of the turkey-cock order, and not built on soaring principles.

I knew de Snouques when he was plain Snooks, of Snooks, Wilson & Gumbey, Tallow Chandlers. They made lots of money in tallow, lard and grease, and Snooks retired worth considerably over a million. He then moved on the Avenue, set up his carriage, with a crest on it, "*Sit Lux*," under it, a very appropriate motto for a Chandler, and under the tutelage of Betsy Snooks, his wife, who in her earlier career was the chief culinary

artist on an Erie canal boat, transformed themselves into the de Snouques, and a swell lot they became.

Mme. Bettina de Snouques, as Betsy called herself, brought up her large family in a very "go style," and the young fellows, her sons, instead of becoming honest chandlers, and useful members of the community, became swells; wearing striped shirts, and white collars, and monocles; and sucked their caneheads, and were of general uselessness—and her blooming daughters, bloomed with such irridescent, dazzling, corruscated effulgence in the matter of toillette, that it fairly took one's breath away to behold them.

And when Florine, the eldest girl, was to be married, Mrs. Woolet and myself were honored with an invitation, presumably sent in a charitable spirit, to enable us for once to see what a real "sassiety" wedding was like.

We attended the fashionable church, wherein a fashionable minister, with a fashionable assistant, directed a fashionable service, in a fashionable and absolutely correct sort of a way, and we formed two of a crowded congregation, who came, as we had come, to stare at the glowing picture of magnifi-

cence which unfolded itself to our gaze, as the Bridal procession swept up the centre aisle.

Twenty-four little bridesmaids, with large hats, and each bearing a basket of choice flowers, led the way. Twelve "dude" ushers, with high collars, holding their heads in an absolutely regulation clutch, attired in Prince Albert coats, white vests, lavender trousers, and peaked pumps, followed. And then came the bride, blazing with diamonds, and wearing what Mrs. Woolet termed, "a shimmering conception of a divine artist." And Betsey—I beg pardon—Madame de Snouques, radiant in color, bedecked with jewels, painted, enameled and befrizzed in a way that would have made the captain of her canal boat, had he seen her thus gotten up, mount his leading mule, and ride away, as if Satan were behind him."

Poor Snooks ! He looked miserably out of place. He was the only one of his family who seemed to shed genuine tears, and who clasped his child to his foolish, yet honest breast, when the ceremony was over, and gave her a hearty kiss of affection. He tried to do the same with Betsey, but she warned him off, for very prudential reasons.

We left the church and went to the reception. We were overcome with the mountains of cut flowers, with the large orchestra, with the presents—costing a fabulous sum—and with the fashionable mob which fought for the champagne and terrapin, in rather a democratic and hungry sort of a way.

We returned to our modest little home perfectly stunned and overpowered, and lost in wonderment at the many strange changes wrought in this world by the whirligig of time—and money.

And insofar from envying Snooks, I pity him so much that I shall invite him to sup with us one night, and give him a sample of the honest, plain cooking of Mrs. Woolet; and we will let him eat it with our family; and in honor of this poor rich man, our children shall, on this occasion, wear new pinafores, and I'll try and help him forget his miserable splendor for the moment, by talking of old times—the good old times, when he was a far happier man, in the old chandlery, on West street, near the Docks.

MR. WOOLET BECOMES VIVACIOUS.

"Here's to a long life, and a merry one;
A quick death and a happy one;
A true girl, and a pretty one;
A cold bottle, and another one."

I was at a dinner party the other night, and with a brimming glass of champagne in her hand a royally pretty woman arose and gave the company the above toast.

It struck me at the time as being neat even if not original, and I committed the lines to memory.

The more I reflect upon the sentiments contained therein, the more pleased am I with them.

A long life and a merry one. No one wants a better fate than that. A sad, sorrowful, sickly long life would be a dreadful existence, but a merry life can never be too long.

And as we must all die, so when death comes, who can want any better ending than a death which is happy, and which by reason of its speedy nature exempts us from pain and suffering.

And then comes that glorious line which craves the blissful companionship of a true girl. and a pretty one.

It must, alas, be confessed that a pretty girl is not always a true one. In fact the fatal quality of beauty is more often associated with fickle coquetry than it is connected with loyal fidelity. Be this as it may, the pretty girl with all her faults is nevertheless an article of girl most in demand. And so, when we find beauty of person associated with truth, with devotion, with virtue, with domesticity, with modesty, and with all those other innumerable good qualities, which of necessity must be found in the girl who is a true girl, then, indeed, to possess so rare, so charming, and so valuable an article, is to render the fortunate possessor the most favored of men.

"A cold bottle, and another one."

This is pure metaphor. But its meaning is easily perceived and readily understood.

Wine represents all the good things of life. It is true that old wine may be found in new bottles, and new wine in old bottles, but in the toast, the "cold bottle" clearly means everything desirable at the right temperature,

and just as it ought to be. Fine house, fine bank account, fine horses and carriages, fine health, fine clothes, fine weather, fine friends, fine humor, fine surroundings, everything fine as silk, and *de capo*, "Another one." It represents the superlative of existence. No notes to pay, no indigestion, no nervous attacks, no doctors or medicine to use, no lawsuits and no lawyers, no trouble with servants, no toothache, no hard grinding work, no gossips and slanders to vex you, no cares to annoy and worry you, all bright sunshine, all *sans souci*, and life, the long, merry life, *a dolce far niente* ending in a quick, happy death, in the company of the true pretty girl, who has grown to a stately old age with you, who has been the charm of your life and the essence of your existence, and the severance from whom will bring to you the only pang you can feel.

Truly the toast was and is a right royal one. Kings and queens can wish for no better fate. It is the creation of a paradise on earth, the leading of that ideal existence which but few enjoy, but which so many of us dream of—dream of—until we sink into that sleep whose dreaming leads to eternity.

MR. WOOLET TREATS OF TEUTONIA.

Teutonia deserves to become immortalized. It is *sui generis.*

In the first place, it lies in New Jersey, not many miles from New York, and its town charter forbids the erection or maintaining of any place of worship within its boundaries.

And then it has a lager beer saloon for every five persons of its population. Teutonia stands peerless and alone in many qualities, but particularly in beer.

It is the American Tarascon. And if my brother-in-law, James, were only a Daudet, what famous tales would a gratified world be able to read and enjoy.

James runs the large factory of the place, and the Teutonians are very fond of him. At their picnics and clam-bakes and shooting festivals, James always provides a goodly quantity of lager beer, and nothing will win the heart of a resident of Teutonia more certainly than a donation of the amber-colored, foam-capped fluid.

The peculiarity of Teutonia, beside its abnormal thirst, is the rapidity of exchanges of husbands and wives.

Mr. Bix comes home and finds his soup cold or his meat tough. He packs up and clears out, and the next day he is living with Mrs. Mix, whose husband left her perhaps a week before for some equally valid cause. The chances are that within a month Mrs. Bix will be Mrs. Mix, and Mrs. Mix will become Mrs. Bix. The Teutonians have no use for lawyers or divorce courts. They are a law unto themselves. They are like the coney, frugal, thrifty folk, and what they thus save in lawyers fees and court costs they consume in beer.

Their great day is Sunday.

Sunday is not spent in useless going to church or the like. It is wholly given over to fun and beer.

The brass bands play; the people sing and dance, or smoke and gossip. Like the Tarasconians, they are great shooters, and are great pinochle players as well. But old or young, men or women, they all drink beer.

The tariff does not fret them. There is no tariff on their beer. The force bill does not

vex them, for they are not forced to abstain from anything they please to do, any day of the week or any week of the year.

And so this truly ideal place, this primitive paradise, so close to this great city, remains somewhat obscured from the world.

James says the very atmosphere of Teutonia is redolent with beer and dog fights. The Justice of the Peace, the only functionary of the law in Teutonia is a Dogberry, a Blackstone and a philosopher combined. He is a typical Teutonian, with a paunch rotund and well lined with the sauerkraut and ham, and a nose tinted like the rosy sunset of the Jersey meadows; he dispenses justice and philosophy with a grace and charm worthy of the great Tartarin himself.

James relates an ancedote of this worthy magistrate, which will show exactly the kind of a man a Teutonia squire ought to be.

One of James' workman on reaching his home one night found that his good wife had gone away. After doing some little detective work he found that a friend of his and fellow workman had enticed his spouse away from her home.

The bereft husband went to the Justice and

demanded a warrant against Bill McCarty who had been guilty of this unneighborly conduct.

The Jusice, after pondering over the situation, gravely refused the warrant, but, as a consolation, he declared that he "always tought dot Bill McCarty wos a mean ordinary lump anyhow."

To arrest a Teutonian for the offense charged would have put nine-tenths of the male population of Teutonia in jail.

I can only call brief attention in this paper to this charming spot, in the hope that some author and writer of talent will visit it; will take up his abode there for awhile; learn the manners, habits and customs of the people, and then disclose to the world what a truly original spot this same Teutonia is.

James thinks it is the greatest place for beer and dog-fights on the face of the earth, and I always agree with James, who is truthful, and, although often in Teutonia, yet seldom drinks beer.

MR. WOOLET TREATS OF TRAINED NURSES.

There are trained horses, dogs, cats, birds, monkeys, even fleas, known to history. They have been trained to do many curious, useful or entertaining things, and are valued according to the degree of proficiency they have attained.

The trained nurse is of modern invention. He or she has become as much part of the exigencies of our daily life, as the horse-cars or ice-water.

There are, of course, good and bad trained nurses.

There is the trained male nurse, who will appropriate unto himself all the brandy prescribed for his pneumonia patient. A trained nurse full of brandy has been known to make things so lively in a house, that the funeral of the patient has been welcomed as a gratifying and restful relief.

Then there is the trained male nurse, who is supposed to massage his patient regularly, and to regularly do other things, at regular

intervals. Sometimes, this trained nurse will massage so severely as to break his patient's arm or leg, or he will take his patient's temperature so carefully, that the autopsy will show that swallowing the thermometer was the immediate cause of the trained nurse losing a job.

Male trained nurses are always honest, but inquisitive. They go through bureau drawers and pockets simply for purposes of information, and not for purposes of illicit appropriation.

But the femals trained nurse is the dandelion of the sick-room.

She rarely drinks or thinks. She makes up for these deficiencies by talking and eating.

A female trained nurse who can't talk a female patient into hysterics and a high fever, is one whose training hasn't been of much account.

Sick women, requiring the services of a trained nurse, are usually supposed to be so sick as to make quiet and no talk an essential and necessary part of the treatment, in order to secure a recovery.

The skillful trained nurse appreciates this,

and to secure absolute silence on the part of the patient gags her with a thermometer.

When Mrs. Woolet was recently very ill, and had to have the services of a trained nurse, I saw how this racket of securing silence on the part of the patient was most successfully accomplished.

Whenever I entered the sick-room, I found Mrs. Woolet lying patiently on her back, with her face turned upwards, in silent contemplation of the beautiful little cupids which adorn the frescoes of our ceiling, and with her mouth puckered up in an Alice Shaw whistling pucker, holding a thermometer between her lips.

And the trained nurse talking to her cheerfully and pleasantly, and constantly; describing the most beautiful operations at which she, (the trained nurse), had assisted, revelling in vivid descriptions of autopsies, post-mortems, stitches, sutures, and gore.

And Mrs. Woolet who couldn't talk back without risking the swallowing of the little glass cylinder, just had to lie there and listen. Tough work, it was for Mrs. Woolet, I assure you; but when she grew convalescent, she got even with the nurse by making *her* listen

to long and faithful accounts of her uncle Abraham, good man, and aunt Zipporah, of pious memory, so that the nurse sicklied and even lost her appetitie for horse-radish, a vegetable of which she was very fond.

I do not desire to belittle the valuable services of trained nurses. They are in most instances of dangerous illness, invaluable. But they are also, to an extent, able to work the matter committed to their charge, with an eye to business, and as I said before, there are generally good ones, and bad ones.

Mrs. Woolet happened to strike a good and faithful one—a most skilled and competent one—and one who was as devoted to her charge as any person could be.

But other friends of mine have not been so fortunate.

Our civilization is tending towards specialties in everything, and one of the most costly specialties of modern invention is the trained nurse.

MR. WOOLET ADDS A FEW NOTES TO THINGS A WOMAN CAN DO.

There are many things a man cannot do. There are some things a woman can do.

Recently the Boston Times in a spirit of fairness admitted and even proclaimed that there are some desirable things a woman can do. Here is a sample batch:

She can come to a conclusion without the slightest trouble of reasoning on it, and no sane man can do that.

Six of them can talk at once and get along first rate, and no two men can do that.

She can safely stick fifty pins in her dress while he is getting one under his thumb nail.

She is cool as a cucumber in a half-dozen tight dresses and skirts, while a man will sweat and fume and growl in one loose shirt.

She can talk as sweet as peaches to a woman she hates, while two men would be punching each other's head before they had exchanged ten words.

She can throw a stone with a curve that would be a fortune to a base ball pitcher.

She can say "no" in such a low voice that it means "yes."

She can sharpen a lead pencil if you give her plenty of time and plenty of pencils.

She can dance all night in a pair of shoes two sizes too small for her and enjoy every minute of the time.

She can appreciate a kiss from her husband seventy-five years after the marriage ceremony is performed.

She can go to church and afterward tell you what every woman in the congregation had on, and in some rare instances can give you some faint idea of what the text was.

She can walk half the night with a colicky baby in her arms without once expressing the desire of murdering the infant.

She can do more in one minute than a man can do in an hour, and do it better.

She can drive a man crazy in twenty-four hours and then bring him to paradise in two seconds by simply tickling him under the chin, and there does not live that mortal son of Adam's misery who can do it."

The Boston Times has not exhausted the list by any manner of means.

Let us see if we cannot add a few points to

the above batch of things desirable or undesirable as the case may be:

A woman can keep a secret, after she is dead and buried and the monument set above her.

She can forgive an injury, but she will never forget one.

She can walk fifty-two miles in one afternoon on a shopping tour, but she will ring the bell and bring her maid up three flights of stairs, to hand her a glass of water from the sideboard.

She can stand two thousand people staring at her in a box in the opera house, but a tiny little mouse peeping at her, will throw her into convulsions.

She can take a seat in a crowded conveyance, and actually not say "Thank you" to the man who gets up to give it to her.

She can peddle out the news that Mr. Jones on the block has failed quicker than any mercantile agency as yet invented.

She can wear powder and paint an inch thick on her face, and calmly pull Mrs. X to pieces in company for "fixing up so."

She can fill her mouth with pins, and keep on talking at her usual gait, and yet never swallow one.

She can send down word from upstairs, that she is not at home, and yet punish her child severely for telling a fib.

She can shed tears like a Niagara for a trifle, and never moisten her eyes at the downfall of another woman.

She can stand more real pain for a longer period of time than one hundred picked men.

In hanging a picture she can drive a nail—that is her thunb nail—into the wall every time.

She can see if one window shade is the one-thousandeth part of an inch higher up than the other, and she can stand fussing with it for forty minutes to get them even, and never swear once.

She can transform the humblest cottage into a Palace of Delight. She can play for us, pray for us and transform an existence of misery into a life of intoxicating joy and bliss.

She can lead a fellow on all summer and then offer to be "a sister" to him without pity or a twinge of conscience.

She can charm and entrance us, rescue us from perdition, or send us there faster than any other means yet invented.

She can look one way and see everything

that is going on in every other direction.

She can save like a miser for six weeks, and deny herself every comfort and luxury, and can spend the whole of her savings like a spendthrift, on a "bonnet" that takes her eye.

She can go out with a party of other women, and not one of the crowd will, as a rule, offer to treat the rest.

She can wear corsets a mile too small and so tight that she can scarcely breathe, and yet keep cool as an iceberg.

She can be clubbed into submission, but argued with successfully, never !

MR. WOOLET INVESTS IN MINING STOCKS.

I am a genuine Woolet.

If half what has been written on the subject of heredity is true, then my ancestors could have no cause to complain of the transmission by nature of a pure stream of unadulterated Woolet blood into my sytem. It is deuced annoying, but turn which way I will, I am always brushing up against and colliding with rascals, who seem to consider me their lawful prey.

I became acquainted with a gentleman from the great State of Colorado, some six months ago.

He was not a pretty man exactly. On the contrary, truthful candor compels me to admit that he was somewhat *passe* in looks; but he wore a huge sombrero, of the same pattern the cowboys in the Wild West Show are so fond of, and he always carried a revolver in his antipodal pocket, and also a large number of pieces of rock, which he called specimens, and which he would pull out and show,

with so eager a look of admiration and love on his face, as he gazed upon them, that I was always reminded of that beautiful ancient story we have read in school, about that sterling Roman matron, Cornelia and her jewels, i. e., her children.

I cannot exactly explain how my Colorado friend, whose name, by the way, was Maltby, played his cards so skillfully, but finally I began to think seriously that there must be a great deal of money in mines and mining. Maltby was fond of talking about his friends, Flood, and Mackay, and O'Brien, and other mining magnates. So when he came to me one day and showed me a telegram from his partner at Denver, announcing the fact that paying ore had been struck in the great Alamagoozlum mine, owned by Maltby & Co., I was ripe and ready for the plucking operation which thereafter ensued. He mysteriously, first of all, pledged me to profound secrecy; "not even to your wife, hark ye, Woolet," said he, and I meekly pledged myself. Instead of asking me to buy the mine, or a part of it, or an interest in it, he merely on this occasion said he was sorry I was not in the deal at the

start, as he would certainly be able to sell the mine to an English syndicate for a *round* million. I lay stress on the word round, for there certainly was nothing square in the transaction.

Maltby left me. I went home, and that night I dreamed of nothing but glittering silver mines, and high derricks, and puffing engines, and grimy miners in red shirts, and lo ! Maltby's face appeared at my pillow, and he opened his capacious mouth and swallowed up mines, miners, engines and derricks—and I awoke. My wife complained next morning of my restlessness during the night, but, Woolet-like, I told her nothing.

The next day Maltby came into my office smiling, and smoking a Rothschild regalia with a gold band around it. He seemed the incarnation of good fortune and humor. He took out some of his specimens, and fondled them, and I—I, was bursting with an insane asininity to beg him to let me in. Finally, he said to me: "Woolet, I have reflected on my mining spec; and dam-me, sir, I don't see why we should let the infernal Britishers walk in and take away so good a thing for a

paltry million—do you ?" I agreed with him. I told him that I thought true patriotism demanded that our lands, our mines, our industries, should be owned by Americans.

Maltby gave me a look—I remember it now. It was the kind of a look the successful angler bestows on a nice, plump five-pound trout, after he has laid the speckled beauty on the green turf.

Let me make this recital a short one. Maltby organized a stock company. I was one of the directors. I was let in on the ground floor. I got my shares at par. The stock was non-assessable. I induced some of my friends—other Woolets—to come in with me. Maltby's capacious mouth swallowed us. We have beautifully engraved certificates of stock in our possession as evidence of the fact that Maltby has dined.

The Alamagoozlum mine was seized by the sheriff, and sold.

Maltby has returned to Colorado. I believe the denizens of Colorado would have called each of my friends and me a "tender-foot." We all got in on the ground floor. This was lucky. We might have been taken in at the third story window, and the

result of such an ingress might have been fatal.

And Maltby was such a fine spoken liar, I really think he himself, after awhile, believed all he said. I have had enough of getting rich in a hurry, and I shall leave mining stocks severely alone in the future. But, if we *were* taken in, it is a great consolation to know that we were taken in on the ground floor.

MR. WOOLET BUYS A HORSE.

I am not a stout man.

In fact, I am quite lean.

Some of my facetious friends have nicknamed me Cassius—I am so lean and hungry looking.

As Mrs. Woolet is quite stout—that is, inclined to *embonpoint*, whatever that means—it does look kind of funny when we walk out together.

In fact she calls me Jack Spratt.

So I have consulted many medical authorities on the subject of increasing my weight.

They all tell me to eat. But, confound it! the more I eat the thinner I get.

The other day I struck a specialist. List to what the specialist advised.

He told me that, "what was sauce for a goose was sauce for a gander; and so as stout men all rode horseback to reduce their flesh, I should ride horseback to increase mine."

I had never mounted a horse in my life; but, as many of my friends to whom I broached the subject advised me that the ad-

vice was sound, I at length determined to adopt it.

I bought a horse.

I owned the horse just forty-eight hours.

He was warranted to be a sound animal—young, kind, free from all vices, strictly temperate in his habits, never known to stay out late at night or to ask for a latch key. He was warranted not to become frightened at a lady's poke bonnet—I guess he never saw a milliner's bill—nor to shy at bustles.

When I bought the horse I noticed that he was blind in one eye—that is, I thought he was—but when I put my hand up to that side of his jaw he playfully snapped at my fingers, which the dealer explained by stating that he was very playful. I did not attempt to play with him again around the jaws.

His back was arched—a perfect inverted arch. I suggested curvature of the spine. The dealer looked at me sadly, and inquired of me with a tone of injured innocence whether I had ever seen him kill a man or pick a pocket. I confessed that I had not. He then asked me if I ever knew a horse to have curvature of the spine. I told him I knew nothing whatever about horses.

He told me to leave it entirely to him. I left it to him, and got left.

I bought the horse, and I bought a saddle and other fixings, and a whip and a pair of spurs, and I mounted that horse and rode him up to the park.

I shall never forget that ride in all my life.

I had not been jogging along a great while before I noticed the people all looking at me with painful anxiety, and then they all laughed. I soon discovered that a man's trousers, when he goes horseback riding, should have straps on them. Mine were devoid of these safeguards, and the result was that my trousers worked up and up, exposing the glaring red flannel underwear I use as a guard against rheumatism.

We went along all right in other respects until we reached the upper part of the road, when my steed got tired and deliberately lay down.

I was nearly crushed.

He lay down then and there and died—died of sheer equine *ennui*—or cerebro spinal meningitis.

The truthful horse dealer, who had pocketed my money, refused to return it, claiming

that he was no life insurance company, and so I lack for the want of adipose tissue.

When the Coney Island season opens I will go down and ride on one of the wooden horses. They travel in a circle, but they are much safer and less expensive.

MR. WOOLET MAKES A COMPARISON.

"Comparisons are odorous," Mrs. Malaprop said, but the comparison I am about drawing, is redolent with a touch of human nature, which I know will reach your minds, if not your hearts.

The comparison I am about drawing is between myself—yes, I deliberately violate this rule of grammar and courtesy—myself, and my old friend and chum, Jack Ripley; and to enable you to understand the distinction I am about drawing, I must briefly tell you that Jack and I were

Tots together,
School-mates together,
Ate together,
Slept together,
Fought together,
Grew up together,
Clubbed together, and

In fact we were from early infancy to early manhood the inseparables.

I was the only *male* being Jack ever

agreed with. You will notice that I accentuate the word *male.*

And then I fell in love with Mrs. Woolet, (who could help it,) and quite unbeknown, as it were to Jack.

And Jack called me a clam, and he went his way, and I went mine.

I married Mrs. Woolet and Jack sent her a handsome wedding present.

And we very seldom met after that, for Jack was rich and a bachelor, and I was poor and a Benedict.

And my family increased, and joys came to me, and a little success in business. And I went plodding along and having every reason to be satisfied. And Jack has scudded along, yet a bachelor, half the year of each year in Europe, making heaps of money and spending it, and not a male friend in the world to bless himself with.

One evening a few weeks ago a party of friends including Mrs. Woolet and myself sat at a well known cafe at a fashionable watering place and enjoyed ourselves in a quiet fashion, as married folk of respectability are wont to do. When out of the shadows of the broad veranda, emerged an imperial vision of

beauty. A stately woman, a perfect Cleopatra or Juno. She was a well known burlesque actress, and the flashing diamonds and rustling silks she wore never came out of her salary list, you may depend on't.

And her escort was——

Jack.

I looked at him as he swept by, never noticing me, but enrapt by his fascinating companion, and I sighed.

"Poor Jack," said I to myself.

He looked so pale, so *blase*, and so very very bald.

And he has'nt a male friend in the world.

And I am afraid the only female friends he consorts with are of the flash kind; friendships which he purchases. So when I saw Jack, my old friend, and companion, like a moth hovering so very close to the flame; or like the fly, the poor little fly, in the spider's web, in the company he was in, a type of the company he has been keeping during the past twenty years, I felt very sorry for him. And I did not envy his big bank account. And I compared my lot with his, and I felt very wealthy, very pecunious, and very much ahead of Jack. I felt myself to be a perfect

Vanderbilt in happiness compared with him.

Poor fellow.

And I gazed upon Mrs. Woolet and then upon Jack's regal companion, and Mrs. Woolet looked much more attractive to me, much handsomer, more womanlike, more of anything worth owning and loving and revering in this world.

Poor, poor Jack !

So pale, so *blase* and so very bald !

How very lonesome you must feel, Jack.

And I, with my wife and little ones, the latter growing up to be very big ones, am never lonely; am always in good company, and I can have their smiles and caresses, Jack, without having to open bottles of champagne, and to buy diamonds and silks and all that to secure them.

Oh, Jack, you miserable, poor fellow, you.

Why did you not take my advice and follow my example.

You would never in the world have looked so very pale, nor so *blase*, Jack, nor would you have become so utterly bald, Jack.

I suppose there are lots of wealthy fellows filling our high-toned bachelor apartment houses, and tagging after just such women

as we saw you with on the occasion referred to, just like you Jack, just as pale looking, and *blase* and bald, Jack, who find life one continuous yawn, and who must in time welcome even death as a happy relief from an existence which is so irksome and such a bore.

Poor Jack !

How I pitied you, and how I dug myself in my ribs and fell to chuckling over myself and Mrs. Woolet and the little Woolets. It was a perfect sermon to me;—and to you, reader?

MR. WOOLET INVESTS IN A BURGLAR ALARM.

I am not naturally of a timid nature, but, I am sorry to say, Mrs. Woolet is.

She received a great shock one day some years ago, when a practical joker sent her word that her rich uncle Abraham had died, leaving her a fortune of several millions, which report almost frightened her to death. It was not true, of course, as the old uncle, bless his heart, still lives; but from that day to this Mrs. Woolet has not been the same person, and her especial concern is burglars.

Whether she thought these worthy gentlemen had heard of her good fortune, and intended to break in, so as to murder us, like Duncan, in our sleep, and carry off uncle Abraham's two millions, or whether she had been reading Rider Haggard's works I do not know; but I do know that she insisted on having me procure a burglar alarm, and like the good and faithful Woolet I am, I immediately proceeded to execute her behest.

I had read much of the uncertainties of burglar alarms.

How, like the policeman who is never on hand when wanted, it would work at all times except when the burglar came, and then it remained, as a rule, mute as a coffin nail. How it had the strange nature of ringing a man up at odd times and unnatural hours for nothing. I called on a firm who supply these guards, and frankly stated what I had heard concerning these alarms, and that I doubted their efficiency.

The little electric man who waited on me, and who was as full of snap and electric force as a dynamo, sharply asked me what I personally knew about the matter, and whether I had ever been a burglar myself ? a question which filled me with horror and indignation.

He then rapidly explained the working and beauty of the contrivance sold by his firm, and before I fairly knew what I was doing, he had booked my order, and bowed me out of his front door.

I went home and told Mrs. Woolet all about it, and she was satisfied.

The workmen came and wired our house, and connected each door and window, and

the cellar and the scuttle, and the alarm was set up in my bed room, and I paid the bill, and Mrs. Woolet was happy.

But I was not.

Sleep left me. I could not get to sleep for fear the confounded thing *would* ring and frighten us, more than all the burglars in creation could.

The face of the alarm became a hideous, grinning spectre to me, but Mrs. Woolet slept by my side as calmly and sweetly as an innocent babe. After losing six pounds of flesh, and gracious knows I have no superfluous flesh to spare, I grew desperate, and so last night I took a large draught of chloral after having had no sleep for ten nights, and then I slept.

How long I slept I do not know; but we were awakened by a pounding on our bed room door, and the cries of our servant bidding us get up. I did so in a sort of semi-comatose condition. I got thoroughly awakened, though, when I was informed that the house had been robbed during the night.

I dressed and went through the house. Everything was secure. Not a window connection or door disturbed. The cellar was

safe and the scuttle of the roof intact, and yet all our plate, dresses, and other valuables had vanished.

I went to the burglar alarm and tried it; it worked perfectly. How did the burglars get in and how did they get out without raising an alarm ? That was a mystery.

I reported the robbery to the nearest police station, and a detective was sent around to investigate the matter. I explained things to him. He went through the house with me, and when he reached the top floor front room, he smiled, and pointed to something which had previously escaped my notice.

The fireplace guard was lying on the floor. The burglars had quietly come in, and had with equal quietude made their escape by way of the—*chimney*.

Mrs. Woolet is silent now, and I propose to interview the fussy little man who sold me the burglar alarm, with a club.

THE CHARMING MRS. WOOLET.

MR. WOOLET DISCUSSES A PHASE OF SUMMER LIFE.

Mrs. Woolet is a great woman.

She is a diplomat.

A born tactician.

As a man, she would have became a second Metternich or Bismarck.

As a woman she is simply adorable.

And for this especial reason.

We have just left our summer residence by the sea.

It was a large villa, where respectable families were entertained, got board, or were bored, as the case may be, for a consideration.

There were a large number of families in this marine villa, and nice people they were and no mistake.

Merchants and lawyers and a doctor, also a mathematician from Berlin.

This mathematician was always writing or asking questions. He was a peripatetic interrogation mark.

"Vot es zees Mr. Woolet ?" he would continually ask of me.

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But the particular charm surrounding this saline aqueous summer resort, for me, were the ladies.

The ladies we met at this particular place were absolutely charming.

It is true they gossiped a little.

And those of them, whose liege lords and masters only visited the place once a week, did betray some envy towards the few fortunate wives whose husbands appeared nightly; but taken altogether, they were as pleasant a lot of ladies as I ever saw together. And Mrs. Woolet reigned supremely among them all.

Her diplomacy was so great, that these strangers actually believed her to be the hub, from whence radiated the social spokes of their summer existence.

She taught them new lessons in fancy work.

She meekly listened to their recipes for concocting new dishes—chestnuts for her. She fondled their pet dogs, although she hates dogs.

She went bathing with the swimmers, and romped with them in the surf as if she was a born mermaid.

She got back and sat down with those who never "dipped," and said she was glad to be with them.

She discussed Rudyard Kipling, with a literary lady.

She sat by the side of the piano, for one hour and listened to the musical boarder play Bumstuffsky's latest sonata.

She physicked the servant girl who had taken sick by eating too much.

And she even listened for a whole evening to the turf talk of a sporting gentleman who gave her Tod Sloane's pedigree, his victories and defeats.

She never kicked once to the landlord. And she never lost her sunny smile when the mosquito made things warm and lively.

And so, when we parted one morning from these pleasant ladies, she gave each one her card, and each one of them gave her's in return, and they each mutually vowed to see each other at least twice every week during the rest of their lives.

I have seen these cards exchanged before.

And I have seen nothing of the good people who gave them out, and they have seen nothing of us.

But it's human nature, and it is etiquette, and the proper thing to do. And all these ladies tearfully conducted Mrs. Woolet and the younger Woolets in sad triumph to the depot, and I followed musingly in the rear of the procession carrying a bird-cage, a bundle of umbrellas, a shawl rolled up, and a big satchel.

And Mrs. Woolet diplomatically kept up her record, by taking farewell of her admirers in a most affecting fashion, whereat the young Woolets began to blubber over parting from their young chums.

And the train sped away, with Mrs. Woolet on the rear platform waving her kerchief, and a tableau of beauty and sorrowing loveliness combined with some children and a dozen pet dogs, rapidly fading from sight.

And as Mrs. Woolet came in out of the draft, with a cinder in one of her beautiful eyes, she wore, nevertheless, an expression of conquest worthy of her achievements.

She is a most perfect woman, and I am very, very glad I married her.

MR. WOOLET DISCUSSES SOME SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

I believe in weddings.

I believe them to be very necessary.

I also believe in celebrating anniversaries such as Birthdays, Wedding-days, etc. I also believe that funerals are proper and sanctioned by custom.

It is true the man in whose honor the funeral is being solemnized does not as a rule seem to enjoy it very much.

But it would hardly be decorous for the celebrant to muss around much, and make himself too conspicuous as it were.

Christenings are proper too.

Every set of parents will see to it that their offspring is suitably named and duly initiated into good society in a proper manner under the aegis of the church.

But all these celebrations are fraught with a direful expense, as witness the following itemized account.

My friend Stickem is married and a girl baby is born unto him. A handsome basket

of flowers is sent to Mrs. Stickem, and a silver spoon to the baby.

Miss Stickem is christened Dorothy, and Mrs. Woolet and I are selected for the honorable position of God-Parents. That means a handsome silver cup cuitably inscribed for Dorothy.

Every one of Dorothy's birthdays thereafter means a birthday present from her God-Father.

Dorothy is confirmed and the Woolets give her a gold watch.

Dorothy's birthdays continue after confirmation and so does the obligation to give presents.

Dorothy reaches womanhood and gets engaged, that means a very elegant basket of flowers.

Dorothy gets married and that implies a rich and costly wedding present.

Dorothy in time becomes a mother, that means more flowers.

Dorothy falls ill, and poor woman dies, and the Woolets are expected to send a magnificent floral emblem of their sympathy and woe, at an expense of from ten to fifty dollars.

Dorothy is out of the way, but Dorothy's parents were not and are not.

Dorothy's parents celebrated their wedding anniversary regularly. And as regularly invited the Woolets to their home on each of said momentous occasions.

That meant a basket of flowers for the Stickem's every year.

Sometimes the Stickems went to Europe. That meant a basket of flowers for the steamer.

The Stickems celebrated the following important anniversaries in a most pretentious fashion:

Paper wedding.
Wooden wedding.
Tin wedding.
Crystal wedding.
China wedding.
Linen wedding.
Silver Wedding.
Bronze Wedding.

And if we live long enough the Golden and Diamond weddings are yet to come. The foregoing celebrations were, however, costly and what is more, the costliness of the same increased in a fine ratio.

I have never received much, if anything, from Stickem. I don't sell him goods. I have never made any money out of him. It is true he once in a while allows me to indorse some notes for his accommodation.

And Mrs. Stickem, philanthropic, kind-hearted woman that she is, visits me two or three times a year at my office, and gets me to buy tickets for benefit performances, or church fairs or the Lord knows what not. I have figured this matter up, and the alarming fact stares me in the face that my thirty years acquaintance with the Stickem family, reckoning compound interest on the price of these multitudinous gifts, has cost me about six thousand seven hundred and forty-nine dollars and sixty-five cents; railroad fares and treats not counted.

It is time to cry a halt, say I ! When a man is thus haunted as it were from the cradle to the grave; when friendships to be maintained must be thus purchased, then I say abolish friendship.

My readers may fancy that all this is satire.

Not a bit of it.

It is frozen truth.

A serious reflection.

That *Moloch*, fashion, becomes more and more insatiate and rapacious, more idiotic and insensate in his demands.

A Croesus or a Vanderbilt can stand this racket, and even enjoy it. But a poor man, or one of the middle class—never !

So I enter my protest against all this sentimental nonsense.

Its all right to start a young couple, who marry, on their journey through life, with some suitable present.

But when custom demands such continual and excessive sacrifices, then I say, let us raise the banner of revolt and put an end to this nonsense.

It is nauseous.

And A. Wellington Woolet, for one. is tired of it.

MR. WOOLET GETS DUPED.

A woman, the wife of one of my workmen, came to me the other day, weeping bitterly and told me her husband had died the day before.

I tendered her my most profound sympathy.

I endeavored to console her by telling her we were all doomed to die. That his sufferings were at an end. That a future life of joy and rest had opened up a vista of eternal happiness for the lamented departed one.

She seemed touched with my language and then stated that she had another heavy trouble to face, in that she did not have a dollar in the world wherewith to provide a decent burial for her deceased spouse.

I felt deeply moved at this statement. Death is so awful a thing to contemplate, that even when it enters the home of the rich man, it is a great calamity. But when to the horrors of death are added the dire woes of poverty, well, I dashed a tear from my eye, told the good woman to go home, and that I

would soon follow her to relieve the wants of her situation.

She left me.

After hurriedly transacting some business of a pressing nature, and providing myself with a goodly stock of ready money, I went to the house of mourning, and then ascending the three flights of rickety stairs, knocked at the door and entered the room.

The poor widow was alone with her dead.

Depositing my hat and umbrella on a chair, I went to the side of the room where the body of my former workman lay stretched out on a pile of straw.

His white hair, his high forehead, his ruby tipped nose, and hang-dog lip, were all there as in life.

"Poor fellow," I said to myself, "you were a drunkard, a lazy, good-for-nothing shiftless fellow, but you are dead, and death settles all accounts."

I handed a fist-full of bills and coin to the weeping, sobbing relict, and taking my hat, left, amid a shower of her blessings.

I tripped lightly down stairs, as a man will walk when he feels virtuous and after having performed a kindly action.

When I reached the front door, I found it raining, and then remembered that I had forgotten my umbrella upstairs.

I retraced my steps.

I knocked softly at the door and opened it. And to my unutterable surprise, horror and astonishment, found the corpse and his widow sitting at the table, engaged in the ghastly business of counting up the funeral money I had left behind me.

I grabbed my umbrella, and fled from the scene.

Hereafter, Mr. Potter will bury any or all impecunious acquaintances of mine in his field.

But the old sinner's nose was red, and I had forgotten when I gazed upon him that a dead toper's nasal organ always turns blue.

MR. WOOLET TELLS A STORY WHICH HAS A MORAL.

Snoggins is a friend of mine.

A bright, industrious fellow is Snoggins.

He has worked faithfully and hard, and has reached a comfortable condition of affairs in life.

I may here properly state that my acquainance that a man would be apt to have who was period of several years, has hitherto been solely of a business nature.

Snoggins came into my office the other afternoon looking extremely unlike himself.

In truth he had the same ghastly appearance that man would be apt to have who was just roused out of a hideous nightmare, or who was leaving court after having been sentenced to be hanged.

As I shook hands with him, I said: "Snoggins, you don't look quite like yourself this morning."

"Woolet," replied he, in a sepulchral, unnatural tone of voice, "I feel worse than I look."

"What's the matter ?" enquired I.

"Listen," said he, as he seated himself and gave vent to a gruesome groan.

I listened attentively, and here is the story Snoggins related to me:

"Woolet," said he, "some three years ago I met a girl, the fairest, loveliest, handsomest, most charming——"

"Of course, Snoggins," I interrupted, "I understand that—they all are, don't waste time on that."

He cast a reproachful glance upon me and continued.

"Well, she was as I thought, perfection. Our acquaintance ripened into friendship and then into intimacy, and then—how could I help it ? Who could help it ?—love. Four months ago she became my affianced wife, and we were to have been married the middle of next month. But, oh, cruel fate !" and here Snoggins dissolved into a flood of tears, while I sympathetically looked at him, having, as the novelists would say, a suspicion of moisture in my own eyes.

Having in a measure regained his composure with a quavering voice and watery eyes, Snoggins proceeded to unfold his tale.

"Last night, Woolet," said he, "I had her at the theatre. On leaving it I ran up face to face with an old friend of mine whom I had not seen for years. I introduced them to each other. I noticed that as he looked at her he gasped, sort of—you know what I mean Woolet! he kind of caught of his breath and mumbled something, and ran away. I was so happy, yes, so happy, Woolet, that I paid no attention to this very extraordinary conduct on the part of my friend."

"Well, why should you ?" said I, "the man is evidently an idiot. Why should you ?"

"Listen, Woolet," wailed he, "listen. This morning my friend called to see me." "Snoggins," said he, "who was that piece of dry-goods you had with you last night ?" "That," replied I, "is Miss ———, my intended wife." Oh ! indeed !" said he. "Yes, indeed !" said I, commencing to bridle up at his presumption. "Well, Snoggins," said he, "all that I have got to say to you, as a true friend, is that your intended wife is my Chicago divorced wife. Good morning !" And he left me, stunned and helpless.

"Well, what if she was ?" replied I. "Snoggins, so long as the proceedings were all

regular, what of it ?" "What of it!" fairly shrieked Snoggins. "This much of it, Woolet, that he came back two hours afterwards with two other fellows, each of whom swore to me that she, my darling, was also the divorced wife of each of them. What am I to do ? Oh ! tell me. What can I do ?"

"That's bad," I musingly answered. "To have been married and divorced three times is slightly cumulative. Go to her, and, with gallant delicacy, break off the engagement; tell her to release you; tell——"

"Oh, bosh ! Woolet, don't you see that she'll sue me for damages, and have me locked up, and there'll be no end of muss and scandal. I can't do that."

"I pitied Snoggins, but referred him to a lawyer, and he left me, Niobe-like, dissolved in tears.

The next morning I received a note from Snoggins, which ran as follows:

"Dear Woolet: Hooray ! Hooray ! It's all a mistake. It seems it is a case of mistaken identity. My girl resembled the triple plated divorcee as like as two peas; besides my friend was drunk the night I met him at the theatre. I am so happy, and you shall

come to my wedding; but for my sake, as you love me, never a word to anyone. What an ass I was to doubt my darling for a moment. Thine, SNOGGINS."

And, as the sweet soft April zephyrs swept over the streets, filling the eyes, ears and nostrils of the citizens abroad with the whirling dust, I softly said to myself: "Snoggins' case of mistaken identity may be a case of song and dance for Snoggins in the sweet bye and bye."

Moral: Be not hasty in taking a long jump at conclusions, especially when the principal witness is under the influence of strong spiritual emotions.

MR. WOOLET ADOPTS THE SCRIPTURAL STYLE.

A friend of mine, the other night, asserted that it was not an easy matter to copy the scriptural style of writing.

I told him it was as easy as rolling off a log.

He defied me to prove it.

I am proving it, hereby, so let the reader decide.

"Verily all is but vanity," saith the preacher; and the preacher is filled with knowledge and practical experience in the matter of vanity. For lo, he hath a church choir to care for, and that is the vainest creation of all things earthly.

And lo, we have come upon the season ot unripe fruit and of the political candidate. And the land is filled with strikers and with kickers.

And they tarry with the candidate.

Yea, they drink of his drink, and feed on his food, and they borrow many shekels from him, which they never repay.

And the heart and spirit of ye candidate is elated and filled with pride, for he forgetteth that pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall—election. But on the morrow after the day of selection, ye candidate's soul will be filled with bitterness and his heart will be heavy with sadness.

Travail and burdens shall afflict him, for his heelers, and kickers and henchmen have bartered and sold him out.

Yea, they will have delivered him unto his enemies, bound hand and foot, even as Samson was delivered by Delilah into the hands of the Philistines.

And ye candidate will tie up his aching head with ye red kerchief, even with ye Bandana, and he shall sit upon the doorsteps of his habitation and his tears shall fill the sidewalk and his groans the air.

Not so green is the grass of the meadows as is the greenness of ye candidate.

Not so fresh is the young lamb which skips in the fields, as is the freshness of ye candidate.

Neither Ceaesar of ye Romans; Alexander of ye Macedonians; or Timothy ye Campbellite were as ambitious as is ye candidate.

And lo, he hideth himself in fear and alarm and is seen no more, for the slayer of fools hath appeared on the highway, and ye candidate hath with discretion tarried not."

So there, I think the foregoing about as neat an illustration of the mediaeval biblical style of writing as can be found anywhere.

MR. WOOLET SERVES ON THE JURY.

I have been informed that the jury system is the great bulwark of our liberties. It is said that the jury box, is the greatest engine of justice whereby rights are protected and wrongs redressed, as yet devised by any human agency. I am in doubt about all this being exactly true.

I have served on a jury, and I don't quite agree with all that is claimed for the system.

I rather imagine that if I had any very important case I would prefer to leave it to one or more good, impartial judges, rather than to an average jury of twelve good citizens.

The trouble is, the average citizen who gets into the jury box is, as a rule, a very disgruntled, dissatisfied man.

He has by the grim ordinance of fate been drawn to serve at the very worst season of the year, for him.

His partner is away, or at home sick, orders are behind and not filled, new goods are to be made up, et cetera, et cetera, and the

average citizen therefore tries very hard to get excused, and is a much more disgruntled man, when the judge orders him into the box, and swears him in, and there he is, caged.

He is mad clean through.

He is so mad, that he at once makes up his mind to beat the plaintiff, because as he argues, if the plaintiff had not brought the case into court, there would be no case to try, and he, the juror, would be at home instead of being cooped up in the box compelled to listen to a lot of talk, dreary talk, wrangling lawyers, and more talk, and all about something that can't possibly interest him, or anybody but the interested parties. So this good and conscientious man who has sworn "to well and truly try the issues between John Doe, plaintiff, and Richard Roe, defendant, and a verdict render according to the evidence, etc.," doesn't listen to the evidence, but frets and inwardly worries, whether the six bales of sumatra have been taken out of sweat or whether they are cooking yet, or whether Keyer, Mann & Co., have got their goods; or whether the insurance matter has been attended to by his broker; or whether he will get the discounts he asked the cashier

of his bank to let him have the day before, and what he will do if he don't get the accommodation; and how Missouri Pacific is to-day, he being long of the stock on a bear market. And how his youngest boy, whom he left croupy in the morning, is getting on. And whether his wife will insist on going to the Blewey wedding, and how much he will pay for the wedding present. And if his life insurance premium is due to-day, or is it not past due ?

And then the plaintiff rests, and the juror finds out that the defendant is at it, and he takes a strong dislike to *him* and determines to beat *him*. "Hang this fellow," he thinks, "why ain't he honest, why don't he pay his debts; I have to pay mine. What does he bother business men in this way for ?" And then he forgets all about the case before him, and thinks of his mother-in-law coming to visit him for the summer, and he shivers so much at the idea, that the juryman along side of him asks him if he has taken a chill, and this leads the way to a pleasant chat about some topics of the day, and finally the case is finished and the judge charges the jury, that is, he doesn't

charge them a cent for all the law he lays before them, because the city pays him for doing that. But he charges them full of the law which our average citizen is to apply to the facts, to whose recital he has paid no manner of attention; and then the jury being tired enough, are retired, and they get together in the jury room, and each man pulls out his watch and finds that it is long past his dinner hour, and so some talkative, bright fellow, if such there be, or the foreman, who of course must be there, says he thinks the plaintiff is entitled to $5,000 and another one thinks he is only entitled to $800, and another one says *six cents*, and they wrangle awhile and get very hungry; and the bright fellow of the lot takes and adds up what each man thinks the plaintiff ought to get, and divides the total by twelve, and the result is four hundred and seventy-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents, which verdict is rendered to the astonishment of court, lawyers, and parties.

Perhaps the plaintiff got all he deserved. Perhaps the defendant deserved what he got. Perhaps this was rendering justice as nearly substantial as any other human method could have awarded.

But I am a little timid about the matter, because a compromise verdict is—well let it pass, for here is another jury to be empanelled, and we'll give the system another chance.

MR. WOOLET DISCUSSES MARRIAGE ENGAGEMENTS.

My brother, G. Washington Woolet, is engaged to be married.

G. Washington is engaged.

Yes, very much engaged at the present time.

He always was a very practical sort of a fellow.

Very sociable and companionable with men, and very shy when in the company of those of the other sex.

Shyness and modesty are the special traits of our family, and G. Washington always possessed them in a very marked degree.

He was also, hitherto, quite critical regarding his taste in the line of women, and very plain-spoken about his ideas of what constituted feminine beauty. In fact, Wash. Woolet was so critical in this direction, that all the members of the family took it for granted that he would remain an old bachelor to the end of his days.

My children grew up in the belief that their

rich uncle, Washington, would leave them all his money.

And, then, one day he came to me and said: "Wellington, don't faint, I couldn't help it."

I became very much alarmed and said excitedly, "Wash., you haven't been losing your money in Wall Street, have you ? because you know I always warned you——"

"Bosh," replied he, "I haven't been near Wall Street in a year—guess again."

I vainly guessed one thing after another until he lost patience, and grasping me by the hand he said with great warmth, "I'm engaged."

"Engaged !" gasped I.

Yes, engaged," cried he, "to the sweetest, the lovliest, the handsomest girl that ever lived—form like a sylph, voice that is trickling music, eyes like the stars of heaven, cheeks wherein bloom the roses of health and youth, teeth of pearly whiteness, filling a mouth whose pouting lips are like a pair of twin——"

"Phew!" whistled I.

Whereupon Washington having lost his breath stopped.

Yes, he is engaged—very much engaged at the present.

I never saw a worse case in my life.

He has it so badly that when he comes to table, all the spoons fall off. Spoons go out of sight when Wash comes along.

And his girl—

Well, she is just about as much taken up with him as he is with her.

When they sit together they just do nothing but hold on to each other's hand, and look into each other's eyes until they blink.

It is positively terrible.

He has lost his appetitie.

G. Washington used to be a good man at the table, and he toed the square mark three times a day.

Now, he won't eat.

He just nibbles—eats lots of angel-cake, and nibbles at lady-fingers, and such stuff.

Wash. is no longer companionable or sociable. He used to be one of the boys.

He used to be a passionate lover of whist. No rubber of whist for him now; he prefers to sit and *rub her* cheek.

He used to light up all the gas jets in any room he ever sat in.

"Light, plenty of light," he always cried.

Now-a-days, or rather now at nights, he sits in a back parlor in a cimmerian, inky, pitchy, darkness.

And says that the light of his love is brilliant enough illumination for him.

Poor fellow.

He has it very, very strong.

The practical man of business now spouts poetry by the yard.

He sighs like two or three furnaces.

He sighs continually, until everybody around him catches the infection and feels sad and tired, and gloomy, as if a funeral and not wedding was to be the end of all this business. He has taken a sudden and decided interest in astronomy, and keeps looking for the moon in the heavens, holding on to the girl all the time.

They make "goo-goo' eyes at each other.

They call each other infantile names, in a language which fond mothers imagine their young babes understand. They are oblivious to the rest of the world and all beside—

I refrain from mentioning the osculatory seances which G. Washington indulges in; on that let me draw a veil.

And I have warned G. Washington that the end of all this romancing, after marriage, will be as prosaic and tame as every other marriage is.

Whereupon my own brother becomes my mortal enemy and is ready to slay me.

Well, it is a happy time, and a pretty sight.

This billing and cooing; this caressing and kissing, this trust and sweet servitude.

No teething babies and sleepless nights; no bills, no ills, no quarrels, no clouds, no nawthin, as my brother-in-law, Jim, would say.

Nothing but sunshine, moonlight, flowers, music, angel-cake and dainty lady-fingers.

Cupid at the helm, guiding the barge down the placid stream, which runs through fairy-dreamland.

Happy time and happy couple.

Who would not be G. Washington Woolet? And who of us, even the most crusty and most practical minded, on gazing at the happy lovers, can refrain from feeling a thrill of satisfaction in contemplating their love and happiness? And who will not say it is a good thing to be so very happy, and that life is not worth living, after all?

MR. WOOLET DISCUSSES OLD AGE.

I hope I may never live to get so old, that I will forget that I was once young myself. Very few persons learn to grow old gracefully. It is not a pleasant thing, this getting old.

It has its decided disadvantages.

It dispels so many illusions.

It raises so many doubts.

It, by jove, is a very unpleasant thing generally.

I notice of late years, that Mrs. Woolet, bless her, than whom a sweeter, neater and completer little woman never lived, gets somewhat fretful and snappish when I playfully pull a stray silver thread from her erstwhile raven locks.

I tell you, none of us, not even the best of us, like this getting old business, and therefore I preface this article with the prayerful observation, that I may be spared an old age of pomposity, of verbose domineering tyranny, of uncharitable fretfulness, and oblivion that A. Wellington Woolet, was himself, *in*

propria persona, a young, inexperienced man once, and he will never forget the fact either.

And let me assure you, that in my humble opinion many of the troubles, if not infirmities of old age, are the forgetfulness of younger days, and disregarding youth as untried and of no consequence.

I never want to sit in the Sanhedrim, with the wise old duffers, who claim to know it all, just because they are old.

If their theory were true, how very, very wise an Egyptian mummy ought to be; and what a piece of presumption on the part of that young chap, Tom Edison, to be able to invent anything useful before he got to be eighty years old.

It is this senile conceit that I dread. As Steele truly observed: "A healthy old fellow,that is not a fool, is the happiest creature living. It is at that time of life only men enjoy their faculties with pleasure and satisfaction. It is then we have nothing to manage; as the phrase is, we speak the downright truth, and whether the rest of the world will give us the privilege or not, we have so little to ask from them that we can take it."

That is the point exactly; an old fellow

who is not a fool, can make himself and others indeed very happy.

The secret of remaining young at heart, for we cannot all of us control the effects of time upon our bodies, is to remember our youth, and above all things to continue to associate with young people.

The greatest mistake aging men or women can make in this world, is that of consorting exclusively with persons of their own or more advanced years. If such survive their fellow associates and get very old, they must indeed be very lonely, for they will be absolutely without friends and companions.

So by continuing to associate with young people, acting with them, in sport, in frolic, in a proper spirit, we, in growing old, will not at the same time lose our friends, as we lose our hair, our teeth and our eyesight.

And there is another vice in old age, and that is envy. Envy begotten of malice, and spawned in this instance by forgetfulness, is a grievous sin, for the old chaps envy the young ones, forgetting that they have had their fling, their youth, their patrimony of health, and that the return drafts are coming back and are being presented for payment.

Methinks, that every virtue in old age can be best served by a remembrance of youth.

I also hope when I get old, that my jaws will get weak, or my tongue so heavy that I will be unable to talk long or often.

Why do old chaps gabble so much and so garrulously ? Very few of them know how often they, in the wisdom of old age, talk very poor stuff indeed, and how much better it would be if they did no talking.

But if you do strike a vigorous old fellow, one who can drink a little, smoke a little, joke a little and even admire a pretty girl when he sees one; who has his pains and his aches, but who keeps them philosophically to himself, and does not burden other people with them; who does not ask you to feel his pulse, or hear his heart beat, or stick out his tongue at you to show you how cloudy it is, or who does not give you his mean, yes, his nasty, mean temperature every morning and evening; who does not snarl your head off when you revoke at whist; who is a man who has lived and learned life's lessons not in vain.

Show me such an old man, and ye Gods, I will show you the most favored and best flavored of mortals.

And concerning the ladies, I have refrained from saying anything.

Ladies never grow old. They are always beautiful. As Michelet, that most charming of the many charming writers of France, has truly said: "Woman never grows old. Her face may wrinkle, the lines and furrows may come, and the hair turn white, but she is still crowned with the beauty of maternity, which is essentially youthful, and hence woman remains young to the end of her days."

And whilst it is true that a woman, Madam de Stael coined the *mot* "it is difficult to grow old gracefully," yet bless them and their dear, sweet hearts, they can discount the men every time. There is no finer sight on earth, than a real fine looking old lady. Talk of your young beauties; of your charming sixteen; bah! buds! at thirty, a woman ripens; at forty, she is ripe; at fifty she is good fruit, and above that, if a woman ever will own up to over fifty, why she just keeps shedding the perfume of love and affection over all who come in contact with her.

Don't they love to dress, too, these grand old dames? They are just as particular as to the fit of a dress or the adornment of a bonnet

as their grand-daughters. Truly, old age for women is more delightful in many respects than it is for men. But whether man or woman, I finally repeat and assert it as a broad proposition which can neither be gainsayed nor contradicted, that to grow old usefully and gracefully, we must remember our youth —keep our hearts young—and possess our souls with sweet patience, in awaiting that fading of the body into the life eternal, wherein age—old age—shall never more intrude.

MR. WOOLET VISITS THE FRENCH BALL.

Satan, in the guise of a friend, presented me with a ticket for the last French Ball.

"Woolet," said he, "here's a ticket—say nothing to Mrs. W. about it—take in the show and see life."

I yielded to the tempter, accepted the ticket and promised to attend.

For several days, not to mention nights, whenever I was in Mrs. Woolet's company, I felt like a guilty criminal caught in the act of committing some crime.

When Mrs. Woolet, on the evening preceding the ball, began talking about it, and wondering how real wicked it would be, I blushed right up to the roots of my hair, and felt morally certain that she knew all about my nefarious design, and that she had only broached the subject to me to try me.

However, I kept silent, and acting in pursuance of the suggestion of Satan, that is the party who furnished the ticket, and who was to accompany me to *Avernus*, I sent a mes-

sage home not to wait for me, as I would be detained very late down town, and I went to the ball.

The place did look beautiful.

Such lovely decorations ! such gorgeous trappings ! such a scene of blazing light I had never seen.

I didn't feel quite right, though.

In the first place, I had not dared to take my own dress suit out of my house, for fear of Mrs. Woolet detecting me; I had, therefore, at the instigation of Satan, hired a "dress suit," so called, at a misfit parlor. The suit did not fit me. The coat collar came over my ears; the vest and trousers were meant for a man weighing at least 100 pounds more than I did, so I looked about as chipper as a scare-crow.

My usual bad luck did not fail me, either, on this occasion.

Walking around the garden with Satan, we ran up against two ladies who were in fancy dress, whose visages were concealed by masks, and whose hair was painfully yellow. One of them knew Satan and called him by name. She took him by the arm, and the first thing I knew, her "lady fren," as she

called her, had me by the arm, and there I was, promenading at the French Ball. The lady who had thus honored me, must have afforded the onlookers a great contrast to me. I am thin, very thin, and I had on altogether too much clothes.

I was rattling around in my hired suit like a pea in a box, whereas, my companion had on very few garments; that is, the dress she wore, some sort of a Folly arrangement, was cut very low above and very high on the bottom; besides, she was very buxom and stout, very much so; in fact, painfully and noticeably so, and with a very painful supply of yellow hair, she was altogether a lady of very startling and pronounced form.

I began to get very miserable.

And, before I knew it, she got thirsty.

And I met everybody I knew.

And, how they winked at me! and how they slyly dug me in the ribs. Disreputable people to come to such a place.

And, how against my will and better judgment, this lady who held me by the arm, led me to the restaurant and drank wine at my expense, and what was worse, made me drink too.

And, of course, a dozen fellows who had always looked up at me as a perfect pink of perfection, came along and saw me, and made sure it was me, by coming up and shaking hands with me, and talking to me, and drinking wine with me without being invited.

And my cup of misery was not yet full.

For who comes running tilt up against me but my book-keeper, my wife's first cousin, whom I was on the point of discharging for incompetency, time and time again; he, the last man in the world I would have meet me thus.

The heat, the noise, the music, the crowd, and the blonde female, my Nemesis who clung to me, semed part of a horrible nightmare.

And, before I knew it, I, A. Wellington Woolet, was dancing, and my partner began to do some high kicking, which drew a crowd around us, and then drew a policeman who stabbed me in the chest with his club, and told me to quit it or he would run me in. As if I had not already been run into all the calamities life could afford.

But this club thrust was the last straw that broke the camel's back. I took the

first opportunity I could to steal away from my partner; was nearly suffocated and crushed to death in the crowd at the coat room; got an overcoat and hat which I found on getting outside belonged to some other gent, and I was a heavy loser by the exchange. And I got home after exchanging my hired suit for my business clothes at a nearby hotel.

Mrs. Woolet was asleep.

Sleeping the sweet sleep of innocence, while I, recreant, traitor, stole in, cowering with fear begotten by a guilty conscience.

I will never do this again; it is all wrong, all very wrong. The game is not worth the candle. Besides a gentleman will never sneak or skulk in this way.

As for Satan, I have cut him dead. And he appears to be much injured by what he chooses to term ingratitude. But he owes me very much.

Postscript—It turns out that the blonde fairy with whom I trotted around all night, is the fat cook of the German family next door. I will sell my house and move out to the country. This disgrace I cannot stand.

MR. WOOLET DISCUSSES FATE.

Many persons dispute the doctrine of predestination and scoff at fate. Of course the theory that everything is pre-arranged and fore-ordained in the world, is perhaps not fully compatible with the doctrine of free-agency on the part of man.

It is argued, that if man is a free agent, free to be virtuous, or free to sin, reaping his reward or punishment according to his merits, then there can be no pre-arranged plan of creation, or else to punish a man for doing that which a higher and omnipotent power compels him to do, in pursuance of a plan formulated from the beginning, is unjust and illogical.

I do not propose to enter into the discussion of a theological question here. It is a question which has puzzled abler minds than mine, and has set the people of this world by the ears, for many centuries.

I am not superstitious, but withal I have a strong belief and conviction that there is such a thing as luck in this world, and that

fate is one of the qualities which governs and controls the affairs of men.

I passed a sad sight in one of the lower New York streets the other day.

It was not a new sight in the busy streets of the great Metropolis. Simply a poor workman, lying on the sidewalk, with his body mangled and bleeding; a rough, dirty bit of canvas covered him as he lay there dead. The usual story of high building construction and defective appliances. The poor fellow had gone to work but ten minutes before, strong, vigorous, in the full possession of life and health, and endowed with all his faculties. A crash—and then came for him, darkness and annihilation.

Picked out from several hundred workmen—by what ? Chance ? Accident ? Or what ? His death was not of his choosing, nor was it due to his own fault.

I crossed the Atlantic some years ago, and with the ship's crew we numbered fully a thousand souls aboard of the staunch vessel which was to carry us into port.

A storm arose, and one man was singled out by the angry waters that came aboard

one day, and his life was crushed out of him. It was accident, of course, but he drew the prize.

A gentleman had his passage engaged on the ill-fated Elbe. He was near Bremen and yet through whim or impulse he journeyed to Southampton to take the ship there. It involved time, trouble and expense, but through a whim or freak, having no business of any kind at Southampton, no friends to meet there, no cause in fact to go, and even dissuaded from going by his relatives, yet he went to meet the ship in England. The ship, as we know, never reached the port of Southampton. By what process or agency did this man escape the drowning which overtook so many other passengers—accident ? Well a very fortunate one.

These accidents and illustrations might be multiplied to an innumerable extent.

I have a relative, who at the time to which I refer was a middle-aged bachelor, who had amassed a fortune in South America. He went to Europe for pleasure. He was fully forty-five years old, perhaps older, and he had successfully resisted the wiles of the female sex.

He was passing a milliner's shop in Hamburg, many thousand miles from home, as you perceive, and having no earthly use for bonnets as you can imagine. Just at the very moment of his passing the window, a pretty young girl's face appeared in the window. It was one of the sales-girls putting in or taking out a hat from the show. The face arrested the South American. He turned, looked in at the window, went into the store, and making some excuse, looked at the girl closer.

There is no need of elaborating the story. The Hamburg papers were at the time filled with the accounts of the romantic courtship of the South American millionaire and how the poor, but pretty Hamburg milliner was married and taken to his tropical home, to lead a very happy life.

Ten seconds or perhaps to be more accurate, five seconds delay, in her making her appearance in that window would in all certainty have prevented the meeting of these two people. Was the accomplishment of the meeting an accident ? Pure accident ? And if they had not met and married, would that also have been an accident ?

We can thus see how we may enter a very wide field of speculation, regarding the happenings, good or bad, which overtake us.

The sun does not shine by accident. The ocean tides do not rise or fall by accident; the birds do not mate or build nests by chance. And man is no more the creature of accident than is any other part of the universe, of which he is an element. There is a very exact and well defined plan of creation. Nature works in pursuance of immutable laws, and the jumbled, chaotic or single items of each life form the part of a very harmonious whole.

MR. WOOLET ATTENDS A BEEF-STEAK PARTY.

My friend Mr. Topper, is what Mr. James Fadden would call a "dead game sport."

He is up-to-date, *fin de siecle,* rides a "bike," smokes a briar root, bets on the races, sails a yacht, goes to the *Mardi Gras* festival, drinks small and large bottles, is partial to grouse, partridge, poker, and other articles of game, is a member of the best and not quite so good clubs, and generally takes a great deal of solace, comfort and consolation out of life. He is a first nighter at the theatres, and an all nighter at the clubs.

He is a "dead game sport," and no man can controvert or deny it.

But Topper—mind you, is respectable—eminently respectable, or of course I would not have allowed him entrance to the Woolet home.

In fact years ago, when he was not quite so occupied in setting a pace, he was a frequent visitor at our house, and was honored by being made the god-father of Septimus,

whom the Lord forbid, however, following after his god-father's example.

I met Topper the other day, and he said, "Woolet," I am getting up a Beef-steak Party and I have put you and Mrs. Woolet down among the participants."

I thanked him, and when I reached home that evening notified Mrs. Woolet, who was greatly pleased with the invitation, and said something about Topper not being such a bad sort.

On the appointed day, I went home and called for Mrs. Woolet late in the afternoon and found her gowned in a most charming array of Easter finery.

I had never attended a beefsteak party myself, but had heard something said about people eating the steak without the aid of knives, forks or napkins; and that soap boxes were used as seats instead of cushioned chairs. So I delicately—mind you, delicately suggested to Mrs. Woolet that perhaps she was a trifle overdressed—an insinuation which was promptly met with scorn, and the intimation that she was not going out to a party and look like a fool, or as if she had no clothes to wear.

I meekly and promptly, as befits a dutiful husband, subsided into silence.

We went to the location mentioned in Topper's note.

It was in the slums and near the river.

I got a little uneasy as we walked down into the locality of where that euphonious place called "Hell's Kitchen" is situated, and noticed furtively that Mrs. Woolet's otherwise serene countenance began to assume a troubled expression.

We walked on, however, being the head of an admiring procession of about two hundred ragged little boys and girls, who were recruited by a young brute who yelled out: "Say fellers, get on to der mugs goin' to de Morgue to chew bull meat."

We finally reached the designated number on the block, which was redolent with the fumes of the gas works opposite, and there found a small lager beer saloon.

"Wellington," sharply said Mrs. Woolet, "this can never be the place, and either you are a fool or your friend Topper is playing a mean, contemptible joke."

"I will enquire," replied I, gulping down a hard lump which had somehow come up in

my throat. I opened the door, and was welcomed by a buxom hostess, evidently of teutonic origin who said, "Valk right in fur die Beefsteak Barty."

We walked in, and were then led from the saloon where three longshoremen were playing cards at a table, into a large hall adjoining.

We were the first to arrive. As we were ten minutes behind the appointed time, I felt hurt when Mrs. Woolet frigidly observed that I "was always rushing *out* to places and in to places before anybody else" and I said nothing. I was only immersed in a deep bath of briny thought.

There was a funny stove where the meat was to be cooked, and on one side was a big barrel of ale, and in the center of the room were ranged thirty soap boxes and some chairs, and in the other end of the room a piano, which had seen better days and many of them.

The company began to arrive—but not Topper. As none of the guests knew the others, we all sat down there looking at the ceiling and at the stove, and at each other, and at the new arrivals in a dead silence.

I began to think that the title "morgue" was not so very far out of the way.

During all this time Mrs. Woolet's face was a study. Every woman who came in, wore the oldest and shabbiest clothes she possessed, and for evident reasons, I was glad I had spoken. I was more than glad that Mrs. Woolet had sat down on me so heavily for speaking. My hour of triumph had come, and I felt that another lesson of wifely obedience had been taught.

At last the rubicund visage of Topper hove in sight.

We all heaved a sigh of relief. Topper had evidently been dining before he got there—smart man Topper.

He hustled around, introduced everybody to the other body, hurried the waiters, jollied the cook, and asked for the "coons."

"What does he mean ?" anxiously enquired Mrs. Woolet, who felt more at ease after she had borrowed two big check aprons to cover her toilette.

"I thought we were to have steak. I shan't eat any horrid things like coons." I reassured her, and remembered that Topper had informed me that a band of real

Southern darkies would entertain us during the repast.

Finally we all sat down on the chairs, pulled up the soap boxes, and waited.

The coons came with the first course.

The coons were a sorry loking lot (and so were we when we heard them), and one of them looked like a bad fellow who carried a razor.

The steak was served on a piece of bread, dipped with hot butter.

It was good.

Then we each had some ale which was also good.

Then we had some singing by the coons, which was not good.

An so we sat there.

More steak—more ale—more grease—more celery—more ale—more coons.

Some of the guests were munching bones; the big bones cut from the steaks.

We finally got throught with the steak and with the celery and the ale, but not with the grease or the coons.

They danced and shouted and twanged their banjos and banged that poor piano, which meekly submitted, now and then, how-

ever, emitting a weird wail of agony which betrayed the suffering it endured.

And then several ladies with whom ale, and mixed ale, that is ale mixed with celery and grease, did not harmonize or assimilate, got very ill.

And Topper, who was beaming and jolly and on good terms with himself as a man well might be who had enjoyed a good Delmonico dinner, jollied the coons and with a bravery unparellel, even poked the bad nigger in the ribs.

And then to cap the evening's amusement, Topper came around and sweetly stated that it would be only ten dollars a head.

I paid Topper twenty dollars, and then we all went into a stage and were taken home.

Mrs. Woolet said naught to me.

And I said naught to Mrs. Woolet.

Topper is a person *non grata* just at present at the Woolet mansion.

I only thought of what a gorgeous steak *a la Financiere*, what a heavenly glass of *Chablis*, and what trimmings and delicacies we could have enjoyed elsewhere for the money.

But experience is also valuable and you very often have to buy it at a good price.

"SEPTIMUS."

MR. WOOLET DESCRIBES SOME SOCIAL SHAMS.

The other day a gentleman called at my office and greeted me very cordially. We had known each other for many years, although we never had any business or social relations and he had never done me any favor; on the contrary, he was under some obligations to me.

After chatting about the weather and the prospects of a cold winter and the late elections and the Cuban war and the cranberry crop, and a few other equally absorbing topics, of interest, he broached the subject which was nearest his heart and which he soon made apparent was the object of his call.

He told me in eloquent language and with tears in his eyes of his present financial stringency, and how he was so badly off that the landlord was about dispossessing him for the non-payment of rent from the home which he and his family occupied. His recital touched me deeply, and when he saw

that I was touched, he proceeded to "touch" me for a loan of ten dollars.

Whether his touch was not sufficiently magnetic, or whether I was simply enforcing Sheakespeare's rule of being neither a borrower nor a lender, I expressed my deep regret and declined, in which regret he sincerely shared; so at least he stated, and I believed him, and then he left me.

After he had taken his departure, I felt that perhaps I had made a mistake in not accommodating him, and in not for once relaxing a rule which a dearly-bought experience had caused me to enforce; but I had given him the icy stare, the marble heart and the frozen hand, and it was too late to recall the deed.

Imagine my amazement and astonishment when glancing through my evening paper on my way home that afternoon, I read an account in the social columns in the journal before me, of a magnificent reception that had been given at her residence, by Mrs. Skinem, the night before.

The account filled over one-third of the long column of the paper. It contained an elaborate description of the floral decorations,

of the supper, of the wines, of the music and of the guests, whose names included some well known society people.

If the report of Mrs. Skinem's toilet worn on that occasion was but half true, it must have cost enough to pay rent for six months for any ordinary city house, and I vainly looked for the names of Mr. and Mrs. A. Wellington Woolet among the guests, and I also vainly racked my memory to try and think whether the charming Mrs. Woolet and myself had attended the function the night before, and I had perhaps forgotten it.

It may be supererogatory on my part to state at this point of my recital, that Mrs. Skinem was the estimable wife of the gentleman who had endeavored to negotiate the loan of ten dollars from me a few hours before I read this account, and that the mansion which was the scene of so much festive gayety and hilarious mirth, were the the premises from which my friend Skinem was about being evicted for non-payment of rent.

Could a preacher have a better text on which to preach a sermon than the veracious ancedote I have related ?

My backbone at once stiffened and I patted myself, metahporically on the shoulder, for having had the moral courage to resist the tears and entreaties of Mr. Skinem.

"There is no use," said I to myself, "in adopting a good and wholesome rule of conduct unless you enforce it;" and this lesson once more taught me to live up to this rule. I do not mean to say that I will not or would not alleviate a worthy case of need and misfortune by extending the helping hand of charity; but it appears as if a large percentage of our population, and especially those who love to see their names in print in the social columns of the daily papers, live on wind and credit, then keep up appearances which are wholly delusive and false; and prey upon the good nature and credulity of those of their acquaintances whom they can beguile and from whom they can borrow.

The city, aud I believe this country contain many such instances of social shams and humbugs, and I consider such people quite as dishonest when they beat and swindle their butchers, bakers, grocers and other tradesmen, as well as their confiding friends, just as dishonest, I say, as the burglar and confidence

operator, or the forger. The moral guilt is just the same in all of these cases.

I asked myself the question after I had finished perusing this recital of the great Skinem party, why so many intelligent men and women are satisfied to lead such a life under such conditions? They must know, if they know anything, that it is only a question of time when the line of their credit will have been filled and their career of dissipation and luxury brought to an abrupt termination.

I can respect honest poverty; I can lift my hat with deference to the college graduate who wears the white uniform and sweeps the streets, if he can get nothing better to do. The poor house-maid or shop girl who toils for her daily bread, faithfully and honestly, is a queen, in my opinion, when compared with these social shams and parasites, who are too lazy to work and too selfish to deny themselves any comfort that misrepresentation, scheming or fraud can procure for them.

Skinem did not dare approach any of the people he had entertained the night before and tell them his story of shame and want. Perhaps very many of his guests would be found to be very much in his own position, if

the truth were known, but this incident revealed to me once more a phase of our social system which to me and to every right-minded person is distressing and nauseating.

I have often commented that the frequent recurrences of hard times in this country were due as much to the fact that so large a number of American people live entirely beyond their means, and were guilty of the most illegitimate extravagances, as to any other causes; and the longer I live in this world and the more experience I garner, the more convinced I am that this fact is absolutely true.

All that is needed on the part of these people who perhaps are not entirely lost or beyond redemption, is to lay in a stock of moral courage, face the situation as they find it, and go to work honestly and resolutely to make an honest living and to live honestly within their means. They will not have as many people bow to them; they certainly will not have as many people come to their wee apartments to eat rich food, drink wine, listen to artistic music and inhale the perfume and odor of beautiful flowers; but the humble fare they will eat, if shared at all, will be

shared by loyal friends and will give them no indigestion.

The music may not be rendered by so large an orchestra or such good artists as flooded the Skinem mansion with melody, but it will be music attuned to the divinest harmony, and the perfume of a single rose plucked by the hand of honesty or honestly paid for, will ascend as incense on high, with a more beautiful perfume than the sickening odor of a large collection of flowers which have been gathered by the hand of deceit and watered with the rain of dishonesty.

MR. WOOLET TREATS OF OLD MAIDS.

I love old maids.

Ahem—that is to say, I love them as a class.

So does Mrs. Woolet.

As Mrs. Woolet is not an old maid, she can afford to exercise such generosity, but she does really and truly agree with me in this particular, as she does in so many others.

The traditional picture of a sour, crabbed ugly old woman, hating men, and women too, for that matter, solely occupied with dogs and cats, surly, gross-grained and ill-tempered, is a distorted, mean, unjust and untruthful picture.

It is a picture, no doubt, conceived and drawn by crusty old bachelors, than whom there is nothing more valueless in the whole range of creation.

The old maid whom Mrs. Woolet and I have learned to know and learned to love is an entirely different person.

She was born in New England.

New England, where so very many old maids live, and alas, die as old maids.

Her home, a modest cottage; shaded by a tall and leafy elm, with sweet vines clambering up over its face, and turning around the porch and pushing along the eaves, where the swallows and red robins have builded their nests, and sing and twitter, all through the summer day; and the trim walk, and tasty flower beds in front of the house, making the air redolent with perfume, and delighting the eye with their beauty. Here is where our old maid has lived. Here she was born, here she will probably die. Her parents lived here many years. Her brothers and sisters were born and reared here. She watched them grow up, and become men and women. She saw them go out, one after the other, to enter the big world, to fight its battles, to mingle with its busy turmoil, while she remained at home caring for the old father and mother.

It was her sweet nursing that attended the old folks, when the infirmities of age came upon them. It was her soft hand that smoothed their pillows, and gave them nourishment. It was her sad duty to attend

them to the portals of the outer gate, and see them pass away. It was her hand that closed their feeble eyelids, as earthly sight faded from their loving eyes. And so in her sweet, simple way, she sacrificed self in doing her duty.

Many a suitor came to that modest cottage and sought to take her away with him. But the seeking was in vain.

And now with a heart as light as the down on the five o'clocks in her little garden, with her disposition as bright as the sunlight that streams in through the little windows of her room; with her eye as clear as the limpid water that lies in the cool well beside the house, she stays at the old home—alone, and an old maid. An old maid and alone.

She might have gone out into the big world, as the others did. She might have been the mistress of a happy home peopled with loving husband and prattling children.

All the pleasures and treasures of the world might have been hers.

And yet she stayed at home, content to do her duty with the old folks and to become and to remain an old maid.

Perhaps somewhere in a little corner of the

old bureau that stands in her modest little room, there is a package of letters, a faded photograph and a lock of auburn hair.

Perhaps on some battlefield in old Virginia, there is the unmarked grave of a handsome soldier-boy who left the little New England Village, to fight for the old flag and to die for his country.

Perhaps the old letters are tear-stained by an old maid's tears.

Who knows ?

But be her life, interwoven with such a romance, or be it the calm, practical every-day life of so many of the spinsters of our little towns and villages, it is withal a life scented with the good deeds and self-sacrificing acts of a lovely, lovable woman.

And I love that old maid with all my heart and with all my soul.

MR. WOOLET VISITS A ROOF GARDEN.

During the last summer I had occasion to be in town alone for several days in each week, and I found that time hung rather heavily on my hands at night, in this great Borough of Manhattan. The charming Mrs. Woolet was visiting some friends in the mountains, and Septimus was sailing his boat on the Sound; and I, well, I did the best I could, in this hot, deserted city.

One night I met an old friend of mine named Thatcher, who invited me to dine with him.

Thatcher is a widower without incumbrances, past the age of fifty, with a rubicund visage and a bald head, and a general disposition to be counted as one of the boys—very devilish, and very much of a sport; but I have long since ascertained that there was more talk than wickedness about Thatcher, and that he was faithful in his attention to his business, and not a bad lot generally; so being alone and feeling somewhat lonesome, I

accepted Thatcher's invitation, and we proceeded uptown together on the evening in question, and had a very fair dinner at one of the well known New York restaurants.

The temperature on this night had its climbing shoes on, and by the time we had finished our meal the thermometer of the dining room in which we sat was of the temperature of somewhere between 80 degrees and Hades.

Thatcher perspired, and I kept him company, and finally Thatcher said to me, "Woolet, this is infernally hot; what do you say to going up on a roof garden somewhere where we can enjoy the show, and a smoke, and a cold drink if our thirst impels us thereto—and where we can get some air; it is horribly stifling down below."

I assented and we left the restaurant and proceeded to one of the well known roof gardens of Manhattan. I had never been to a roof garden of the variety-show order before; I have heard numerous suggestions as to the class of people who frequent these elevated places of amusement, and I had somewhat of a misgiving as to the propriety of visiting such a place; but a man does

things in Summer, when alone or in the company of a bachelor friend that he does not think for a moment of doing at other times of the year, and so I followed my friend Thatcher in his ascent to the roof.

We took our seats and I looked around and found quite an assemblage of people seated on very rude wooden chairs. On all sides were many glittering, different colored lights, and in front of us was a cheap and gaudily decorated stage of a very diminutive size, and in front of the stage were seated the members of a very inferior orchestra, who did their best, but who, through the long evening, emitted sounds of discord which were no doubt intended to, as they succeeded, drive the major portion of the audience to drink.

I noticed that the audience was composed of a great many out of town people, visitors to the great city, who noisily applauded anything and everything, and also a number of gentlemen whom I knew, some of whom were accompanied by ladies whose very blonde hair and enormous hats covered with towering feathers, formed pictures of bizarre beauty that did not quite appeal to my own particular taste.

The performance was a mediocre one, and what with the inharmonious tones of the orchestra, and the strident and harsh notes of the singing soubrettes, I soon tired of the whole show. Thatcher, however, appeared to be in his own especial element; he imbibed a straw-colored liquid from high glasses, that he called "Rye High Balls." He induced me to taste one of these decoctions and they simply caused me to make a *wry* face. The drink was not at all to my palate. Suddenly the performance on the stage was interrupted by an altercation in the rear part of the garden, among the audience, which was finally disposed of by a very much intoxicated man and a very flashy looking lady, who appeared to be equally under the influence of stimulants, being forcibly and summarily ejected from the place. Quiet being restored, the reiteration of bad music, principally of the kind called "coon songs," and inferior dancing intermingled with the forced humor of grotesquely attired comedians, was continued.

I, at length as the hands on my watch, which I had frequently consulted before, neared the midnight hour, mildly suggested

to my friend Thatcher that I had had a splendid evening's entertainment and was ready to go home. Thatcher, however, was far from being ready to leave that, to him, charming spot. He would not listen to it.

"Woolet, my boy," said he, under the influence of perhaps half a dozen or more of his Rye High Balls, "I tell you this is great; this makes life worth living in hot weather; a man is dead a long time after he dies, and so let's have a good time and not tear ourselves away from these entrancing sights, my boy."

I thereupon mildly, yes, very mildly, suggested to Mr. Thatcher that I would certainly excuse his accompanying me, but that I usually found myself in bed and asleep at that hour of the night, and that with his kind permission I would go home and not think anything of it if he stayed right where he was. Thatcher would not listen to this proposition for a moment. He told me that he had noticed, with a great deal of anxiety and pain, that I was getting to be an old man before my time; that I needed waking up, and that he proposed to wake me up as a loyal friend on that particular night, and that I must not think of leaving him.

The situation became awkward, and to me, very embarrassing.

I had partaken of Thatcher's hospitality, yet at the same time I was falling asleep under the somnolescent influence of the very tiresome performance that I had been witnessing for the past three hours. I thereupon arose from my chair and exended my hand to say good-night—Thatcher promptly grasped my hand and with his other, he, with equal firmness grasped hold of my coat-tails, and being somewhat of a powerful man, he by exerting a downard pressure, promptly plumped me down into my seat again, and there he held me.

I began to get a little annoyed at this superabundance of friendly feeling and began to remonstrate with Thatcher. I then noticed that Thatcher had gotten quite drunk, and in a moment he directed his attention to the gentleman seated alongside of him, who was in company of a lady, and to my extreme horror, requested an introduction to the lady for himself and his friend, meaning me.

I was so crestfallen at this gross breach of etiquette on Thatcher's part, that I got up

from my seat and made attempt to get away from him while his back was turned as he addressed his neighbor. Unfortunately the passage between the rows of chairs was narrow, the neighbor on the the other side of me had his legs extended under the chair in front of him, so that before I could get away from my place, Thatcher turned around and detected me in the act of deserting him, whereupon he promptly seized hold of the skirts of my coat, and tearing them nearly half way up the back, landed me down in my place again.

Perhaps you can imagine my feelings, and perhaps you cannot. The gentleman who sat on the other side of Thatcher had evidently also imbibed some "High Balls" or "Low Balls" and he was ready to resent Mr. Thatcher's impudence by asking him to fight then and there. To this proposition Thatcher did not assent, but offered in place thereof to treat the party, which offer was indignantly refused.

I began to expostulate with Thatcher, who by this time, had consumed several more "Rye High Balls" and he began to make replies in so loud a tone of voice as to interfere

with the stage performance; in fact, Thatcher became so royally drunk that he got the idea that he was part of the show, and he proceeded to stand on his feet as best he could, and deliver an oration to the audience upon the necessity of every American citizen standing by the government in the present difficulties with Spain. I then saw that unless I got Thatcher out and took him home, that Thatcher would get into trouble. Several of the ushers came up to us and I got hold of Thatcher, who playfully began to wrestle with me. Several of the women in our immediate proximity screamed, and a number of gentlemen cried shame. Pretty soon a policeman came along and separated us, and perhaps because I was the smaller, thinner man of the couple, he took me, to my manifest confusion and disgust, out to the passage way and asked me if I was not ashamed of myself, and told me that if I did not clear right out that he would arrest me for disturbing the peace. When I began to remonstrate with him and tried to explain matters, he simply pushed me into the elevator and sent me down stairs.

To say that I was crestfallen to be thus

ignominously handled does not express my feelings. I never was so mortified in all my life, and I went home almost crying with vexation. I did not care three raps about Thatcher, nor did I bother myself very much as to what became of him; but the iron entered my soul when I received a letter from the charming Mrs. Woolet, who has an extreme horror of intoxication, even in its slightest form, in which she read me a lesson which I shall not soon forget, and all because some good-natured friend had written his wife, who was also away in the country, that their mutual friend, Woolet had gotten tipsy on a roof garden and was hustled out of the place by a policeman.

My friend's good wife being a friend, a good, dear friend of Mrs. Woolet's, did not neglect the opportunity to inform her of her husband's shameful actions in the city, while his poor wife was moping alone in some dull, quiet country place.

In the future I shall certainly leave Thatcher and the roof gardens severely alone.

MR. WOOLET RELATES AN EPISODE AND ITS MORAL.

The desire to get rich quickly without working for the money is inherent in the human mind.

The average business man who has attained a commercial position in the world, will bear me out in my experience, that it is a common thing to have someone, at some time come to him with a scheme for making money by means of a small investment, with great certainty and wonderful rapidity.

The other day a good, honest, friend of mine, in whose bosom there dwells no guile, called to see me, and after inquiring about my health and the health of my family, and the condition of business, and where I intended going to for the summer, and commenting upon the unusual quantity of rain that had fallen, finally unbosomed himself by bringing to my notice the merits of a most marvelous invention, the benefits of which he desired *me*, his particular good friend, and only *me*, to share with him.

His little tale ran along about as follows:

"Woolet," said he, "I have by the greatest good luck in the world run up against a most wonderful genius. He is a German engineer, who is poor in the English language, and poorer still in pocket; and he has invented a new and simple telephonic device, whereby you can telephone with the greatest ease imaginable to China, or to any other part of the world, through the air and under the ocean, using an ordinary, common, every-day telegraph wire for the purpose."

"What is more marvelous still, Woolet, is while you are telephoning over the wire you do not interfere with the sending of telegraphic messages in the usual way."

"All that he needs (he does not want any money for himself,) is to have somebody put up just a little money to get the patents and perfect the mechanical details of the invention, and then you have got the biggest thing on the face of the earth."

"Woolet," said he, "this is a big, huge, thing; ther are no Colonel Sellers millions in it, but actual, substantial Vanderbilt millions; millions not in the air, but millions that you can count, in this wonderful invention. And

I thought that I would simply come over to you—I don't want to go to anybody else, I prefer to give you a chance in this deal. The three of us will own the whole concern, and I tell you, you won't need to do any more business after you have the enterprise fairly launched."

I gazed at my enthusiastic friend with some degree of pity mingled with admiration.

He was so genuinely enthusiastic in his honest belief that he had struck a veritable gold mine, that I hated to say or do anything that might interfere with the gorgeous dreams of wealth which this simple invention, that only needed a few dollars to make mechanically perfect, had brought him.

But I have graduated from the school of experience; I have had the wonderfullv simple inventions, that only needed a few dollars to make mechanically perfect, brought to my attention before.

I have met disinterested inventors who only needed a few dollars now and then to keep their inventive stomachs in order, and their cabalistic brains in motion, and I have paid well for fooling with such luxuries. So that I finally, impelled thereto by a sense of

duty, asked my friend whether he had tried the machine, to which he eagerly replied he had. I further asked him if he had spoken to anybody in China from New York whose voice he recognized, to which he hastily replied:

"Oh, pshaw! I have not spoken to anybody in China yet, but the demonstrations made in the room with the crude instrument this poor fellow has put together, convinced me that there is enough merit in it to at least warrant the expenditure of a few dollars on the thing."

I asked my friend if he had any idea as to the amount of dollars it would take to patent this invention in the various countries; and he frankly replied he had not; and he became somewhat serious when I told him that the probable expense of carefully protecting such a world-encircling invention would probably be not less than five thousand dollars, and unless it was fully and properly protected that it would not amount to very much.

I then told him that I had registered a solemn vow not to put any more money into undeveloped inventions, and he went sadly away, and, I presume, unconverted, and

probably will tackle, and succeed in interesting some other fellow who has not yet been through my school of experience.

The moral of all this is, if indeed there be a moral in a somewhat pointless tale, that people are very prone to believe that which they desire to have happen; which is but another way of expressing the trite, old aphorism, that "the wish is father to the thought;" and I venture to assert without any fear of contradiction, that there is hardly a successful business man who cannot point to the investments of sums of money, large or small, in enterprises similar to the one above described, which have never yielded any fruit or return, but disappointment, vexation and loss.

And so it will be to the end of all time.

MR. WOOLET REFLECTS ON A BUSINESS CUSTOM.

Our junior partner was suddenly called out of town the other day. Before he left he said: "Mr. Woolet, Jabez Yokell will be in the city on Monday and you must show him some social attention. He always expects it, and as his trade is valuable, we must humor him."

As the junior had always run this special branch of the business, I expressed my doubts as to whether I was capable of doing Mr. Yokell full justice. The junior winked at me and remarked that he thought I would be able to keep up the reputation of the firm, and left, with some suggestions about taking Yokell out to dinner, then to a theatre, and finally to show him the elephant, if he cared about seeing it. I did not exactly comprehend what the junior meant by the elephant. I had some vague ideas on the subject, but I had never studied metropolitan zoology to that extent which would enable me to qualify as an expert. I enquired of some of my

friends concerning this subject, as I did not desire to betray any ignorance in the presence of Yokell.

Some told me it was the Gaiety Gardens; others told me it was the Hoffman House bar room; others cried "chestnut," and so I was left uninformed, except to the extent of the Gaiety Gardens, of which I had heard much, but, personally, had never seen anything.

Yokell came on time. He selected his purchases, and then I asked the old sinner from Wayback if he had any engagement for that evening. He said he had none. I asked him if he would go home and take dinner with me, and after that we could go to prayer-meeting.

His jaw fell, and he said he guessed he wouldn't trouble me.

I then said if he preferred it, we would dine at a restaurant, and see the elephant afterwards. The hayseed *roue* dug me in the ribs and said: "Good joke, I'm your man; but say, Woolet, you scared me when you talked prayer-meeting. I get all I want o' that down to hum."

We dined together and the temperance

apostle from Wayback filled up on Yellow label. During dinner I asked Yokell what theatre he cared to visit, mentioning several of our first-class places of amusement. Yokell, who, I was sorry to see, was rapidly getting merry and somewhat frivolous, replied that he understood that ———— celebrated troupe of Dizzy Blondes was in town. This show had been at Wayback and had set all the young men crazy. He, of course, didn't dare to go to see it there, but he, "be gosh darned if he wouldn't see it in York."

I was somewhat embarrassed, but we went. The Blondes seemed perfectly self-possessed and not at all dizzy. They were of mature age, and their burlesque had so ancient a flavor about it that I went to sleep before the performance was half oevr. We see these things in much better shape at the opera, you know.

Yokell was delighted, however, and after the performance insisted on seeing the Elephant.

With many misgivings I took him to the Gaiety Gardens. I was not in the place five minutes before I wished Yokell and my junior partner in Hades. I sat in mortal

agony lest some acquaintance might perchance drop in and find me there.

Yokell was entranced, however, so I left him there. He had secured a more loquacious companion than I was.

Yokell came to the office the next morning to thank me for my kind entertaintment —also to cash a check wherewith to return home. He said he'd "had a fine time, but had somehow or other spent all his money and lost his watch—a fine Waterbury stem-winder.

When my junior returns I shall tell him, in language emphatic but firm, that he must stay at home and run his department or else take the risk of losing that kind of trade.

I will positively not lead any people from Wayback to see elephants, neither will I assist them in fighting tigers.

I draw the line at elephants and tigers.

I don't like slumming; and although it is quite English and is sanctioned by distinguished precedent, I have no taste for Gaiety Gardens, or resorts of a like nature. I kick at the idea, and I wont be put in such a position again. No, sir !

Not even to hold Yokell's trade. Shouldn't

be surprised if he failed on us this season after all my kindness. It would serve my junior right if he did, and I am half wishing he will; for I believe that a firm that can't sell goods without doing this sort of thing ought to go out of business.

MR. WOOLET'S EXPERIENCE WITH AMATEUR THEATRICALS.

I have always had a sneaking regard for the stage and drama, and I attend theatrical representations with more delight than I do any other functions or forms of amusement.

I had always thought that if I had not been trained to pursue a mercantile career, that I should have adopted the profession of the playwright, and been nearly equal to Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Sardou and the host of other celebrities who have won fame and fortune in presenting lifelike pictures on the stage.

An so it came to pass that not long ago, when some friends of mine engaged in charitable work suggested that an entertainment of a novel nature be gotten up in aid of the funds of their object, that I, being moved thereto by a spirit of ambition, volunteered to write an original comedy which should be performed for the benefit of the charitable object in question.

In less than two weeks time I had written

an English comedy, which I read to Mrs. Woolet in the privacy of our home, and which she declared was the finest comedy she had ever heard *read.*

I was naturally much flattered by this tribute to my work by so capable and discerning a person as Mrs. Woolet.

Septimus, on the other hand, said that the funny parts were very good, but he didn't like the pathos; but Septimus is very young yet, and does not know how much of the pathetic there is to be found on the stage of real life. And I take it that the true sphere of action of the playwright is to present real life on the mimic stage, and reflect the types of nature in its mirror with accurate fidelity.

A number of our friends, ladies and gentlemen, who were ambitious to acquire histrionic honors, were speedily gathered to take part in the performance of this comedy.

A gentleman friend of mine, whose firm had been in the habit of selling goods to a theatrical wardrobe maker, claimed to be very proficient in the art of stage management, and he volunteered his services to act as stage manager in staging the play.

In allowing him so to act is where I made

my first fatal mistake, because I may state right here, that he was as ignorant of stage-craft and as innocent of any knowledge of how to run a play, as Adam and Eve were innocent of all sin before eating the historic apple.

We had great fun rehearsing the play at my house. The performers met three times a week and threw their whole souls into their work.

The heroine was a lovely girl, who was in reality a very charming singer, and she suggested that at one stage of the action of the play, while she was meeting her lover in the garden, it would be very nice and appropriate for her to sing a love song by Tosti.

I had my doubts as to the propriety of the young lady interpolating such a song at such a point of the play, but was overruled, and finally induced to consent.

And this is where I made my second mistake.

The third trouble, because troubles never come singly, was when the young lady who had been cast to play the part of the old countess (there is always an old count or a countess in English comedy, you know), fin-

ally said, that "her mamma, who had notions of her own, thought it would spoil her matrimonial chances very much, if she, a young girl, were to take the part of an old woman of fifty."

We canvassed through our wide circle of acquaintances and found the astonishing fact to be, that while all the young girls were willing to play juvenile parts, the old ladies of our acquaintance who were willing to take part in the performance were only willing to play the character of young girls and not of old women; so that I was compelled at the eleventh hour to call on a dramatic agent to secure the professional assistance of an actress, and he furnished one who was just then out of an engagment.

And here is where I made another, and very serious mistake.

It afterwards transpired that the aforesaid actress who was just then "at liberty," was a perfect female Jonah, who had brought ruin upon every company with whom she engaged, so that the fact that she was out of an engagement at that time, was only a chronic state and the usual feature of her professional career.

The rehearsals were finished; a large hall was engaged; the tickets were duly sold, and the fateful night came to hand.

Naturally I was somewhat in a state of excitement. I was to play the part of a villain in the play, and a French villain at that, you will notice that the villains in all English comedies are Frenchmen.

The prettiest scene in the play was to be the aforesaid garden scene where the heroine was to meet her lover, and as lovers always meet in English comedies by moonlight, we had engaged the services of a calcium light man to throw the silvery beams of the moon upon the heroine, when she should sing her love song and meet her lover.

When the company assembled on the stage prior to the curtain rising and when the orchestra was playing an overture, I looked through the peephole in the curtain and found a very large audience in front. I knew that the sale of tickets had been large, but I had believed that very few people who bought tickets attended amateur affairs; so that the sight of so large an audience naturally gave me a great shock, and I began to feel as if I wished I had not attempted to play in my

own production. As I turned from the curtain and looked at the assembled characters, I, for the first time, saw the professional actress, who was to play the role of the countess.

I could have fainted. Instead of being made up as on old lady, she, the aforesaid actress, who had long passed her fiftieth birthday, was made up in a low neck dress with every color of the rainbow on her person, and skipping around as though she were sweet sixteen. My feelings were too strong for utterance, but I felt convinced that her part would be successful from a purely comedy standpoint of dress if from no other.

The play proceeded; the actors were well up in their parts, with the exception of the professional lady, who had not taken the trouble to commit her lines to memory, so that the voice of the prompter, whenever she was on the stage, "was heard in the land."

We then for the first time ascertained that she was remarkably hard of hearing, so that the prompter before the end of the play was very hoarse from shouting at her.

This seemed to give great delight to the audience, who laughed at the most pathetic

parts, as well they might, in view of the fact that they first heard most distinctly and audibly the prompter repeat her lines and she, smirking, would say them after him very much like a child learning its lesson at school.

In one scene where a poacher is supposed to be shot by a game-keeper, (there are always poachers and game-keepers in English comedies, you know), the gun did not go off, but merely clicked; the report of the gun was to be the cue for further dialogue on the stage.

The unfortunate amateurs, instead of proceeding after the click, simply waited for the gun to explode; the man who was pulling the trigger did his best; but the charge was wet or damp, and so he clicked away about a dozen times, to the accompaniment of ever increasing laughter on the part of the audience; but when the gun finally exploded with a report that nearly raised the roof, and whereby the unfortunate manipulator of the weapon nearly blew off his head, there was a burst of applause from the audience that exceeded in volume any other effort of the night.

I will not describe such little accidents and

incidents as the stage manager having forgotten to supply the necessary properties for use in the play, and the emergency substitutions of a cuspidore for a punch bowl, (there is always a punch bowl in English comedies, you know), etc., or the fact of one of the characters inviting another one to sit on the sofa with him and there being no sofa on the stage, but pass to the crowning climax of misery which finished the evening's performance.

As I have before stated, the stage manager was supposed to run the stage and all effects connected with the performance.

I had prided myself on the finish, viz., the garden scene and the moonlinght, and fully fifteen minutes before that scene was due, I asked that worthy and ignorant gentleman whether the calcium light man would be ready when he got the signal to turn on the light.

He said it was all right. Five minutes passed, ten minutes passed and then the garden scene was rolled on and the stage was in darkness. So far all right, but when the heroine came on, and the moon should have come on with her, there was no calcuim light.

I called up to the flies where that gentleman was stationed, and told him to turn on his light; he proceeded to *get* ready, instead of *being* ready. We all know what a hissing, gasping noise is emitted when the calcium light is first ignited, and so the heroine, poor girl, stood in the center of the stage ready to begin her song surrounded in cimmerian darkness, with an accompaniment of short, sharp hisses from the back of the stage that was pitiful.

I must admit that for the first time in the evening I lost my patience and swore at the stage manager and the calcium-light man with all my heart.

After a considerable and painful pause, the leader of the orchestra tapped his stick, and the musicians began to play the accompaniment for the heroine's song, and she started off to sing it somewhat invisible to the audience, who appreciated the situation and were giggling loudly and palpably. This did not conduce to the comfort of the poor girl and I sincerely pitied her. She was half through her song when the calcuim light man got his machinery in order, and then came a most unique and unparalleled series of effects.

He had been ordered to produce moonlight, and he started off with a white light, which when it struck the stage and included within its radius the sweet figure of the singer, was hailed with a thunderous round of applause at the hands of the delighted audience, who had been afraid that there would be no moon, but a total eclipse to wind up the play.

The calcium light man had been an old veteran at the Black Crook or some other spectacular show, and the result was, that, following his customs, he produced a most startling series of effects. Instead of confining his efforts to a white moonlight, he after a minute or so put on his colored slides, and the result, I must confess, was startling; the heroine changed as if by magic from a pure and lovely white object to a pea-green, then pink, then blue, then orange, and then brown one. He changed the lights and colors as fast as he could remove and replace the slides; the poor girl did not know what was the matter and the auditors simply sat back in their seats and howled with delight.

The stage manager ran upstairs to remedy the evil; I shouted perhaps too loudly; the orchestra played wildly; the singer fainted

and the curtain came down and ended the performance.

I was warmly congratulated by my friends, who assured me that the play was a great success.

I was warmly roasted in the next morning's newspapers; the charity did not benefit much by my efforts, because the treasurer failed to account, and I then and there registered a solemn vow that I would for all time to come quit writing plays or acting in them, but confine my work in life to attention to my business and the care and raising of my family.

But next morning, at the breakfast table Septimus, who had witnessed the performance on the preceding night, assured me that he never had seen anything so funny and enjoyable in his whole life; and said furthermore, that if the *troupe* would go on the road and give the show exactly as it had been given the night before, all the hens in America would not be able to supply the demand for eggs. And with this crowning insult offered to me by my own flesh and blood, I drop the curtain on my woeful experience in attempting to emulate Shakespeare, Sardou, Goldsmith and Moliere.

MR. WOOLET'S FIRST CHRISTMAS STORY.

Mr. Woolet Has a Strange Dream.

It was a cold, drizzly, December night. Without, the snow fell, and drifted, the wind blew and shifted, the shutters creaked and lifted, and the unlucky wayfarers, abroad on such a night, were making their way through the streets as best they could.

I sat in my cosey library, in an easy chair, in front of the glowing fire of logs, and felt as comfortable and as happy as a man well could feel, whose conscience was clear, whose digestion is good, and whose family surroundings were of the most pleasant character. I allowed the book, which I had been reading, to fall in my lap, and gazed into the fire absent-mindedly.

A musing reverie overtook me, and I must have fallen asleep. Perhaps the book I had been reading contributed somewhat to my state of drowsiness. It was called "The Renaissance of Woman," and dealt with the

recently mooted questions of "woman's new sphere of action," her disenfranchisement and the like.

And then I dreamed the following dream, so strange and so remarkable: so vivid and real, that its impress haunts me to this day, and it furnishes the material for my first Christmas Story.

Leaflet The First.

It was Christmas eve, in the year of grace, 1949. A fierce snow storm was raging over that part of the greater City of Manhattan, formerly called New York; but the arcaded streets, covered with handsome roofs of clear crystal glass, warmed and brilliantly lighted by electricity, were comfortable and attractive.

In the old days, the squalor, the misery and suffering of the poor and homeless on such a night would have been terrible, but the condition of things had, by means of scientific agencies and discoveries, been most radically changed. There was no more freezing to death in the streets of the great city.

And for so much we had a right to be thankful on Christmas Eve.

Leaflet The Second.

Dandredina Blackstone Joyce, stood in front of the electrolier in the reading room of the lawyers' club, toasting her shins, and looking very much bored.

She now and then puffed away at her cigarole, and blew a dainty cloud of smoke through her delicate nostrils.

Dandredina Blackstone Joyce not only looked bored, but was bored. She had been in court all day, trying a breach of promise case; her client, a pallid looking man of uncertain age, had been most cruelly used by a false, fair and dashing woman, and to her great surprise, a jury of women had found against Dandredina's client. Such an unchivalrous thing to do, was really unheard of.

But this was not the only matter which bored the lady lawyer.

Her husband bothered her. He was docile and patient enough. He attended to his household duties with fidelity and attention. He was as good looking and attractive as the average man. He was above all a good father to their children—but, aye and the but, caused her to chew on the end of her cigarole in a vicious sort of a way. He

lacked the dash and style of other women's husbands, and of late he had sulked and waited up for her at night, when she was detained at the club later than usual, and he had had the effrontery to insinuate that a married woman had no right to be out so late and so often, playing poker with the girls.

And so for three weeks they had not spoken, and Jack Joyce's eyes were often red with weeping, and he had not shaved in ten days, and his stubby, reddish beard did not add any attractiveness to his appearance.

And so Dandredina was vexed, and reflected whether other women were bound by equally galling ties to such undesirable mates, and commenced to really hate and detest Jack, who had given her his heart, hand and fortune, and had even waived all courtesy rights in the ante-nuptial agreement which Dandredina had herself drawn.

She began by hating Jack, and then commenced to hate herself. Surely most unbecoming and unchristianlike feeling to take possession of a wife's heart, and on Christmas Eve, at that.

"I wonder what Jack is doing now," she finally exclaimed, "I will see !"

Going to the corner of the room, she took up the receiver of the Telmemyscope, and connecting the instrument with her own home she gazed therein, and saw her husband and babes reflected thereby.

Jack was sitting in their living room in the forty-eighth story of the Megatherium Apartment House, rocking and industriously sewing.

The three boys, triplets, fruit of the "Electric Progeny Producer," for science had divested the element of maternity from the woman of the 20th Century, were playing on the floor.

They were much amused at the gambols of two trained diphtheria microbes, of the size of the former and obsolete house cats, that were playing the game of leap frog with each other.

The little boys laughed, but the unhappy father plied his needle, and while the rich round tears rolled down his cheeks, only sighed and said not a word.

Dandredina was moved at this picture of domesticity and devotion to duty on the part of Jack; she was on the point of calling him on the 'phone when her evil genius in

the shape of Bella Cose, the bachelor maid, and freckle specialist, entered the room, slapped her on the back, so violently, as to cause her to drop the receiver, and as the picture of home faded from her sight, she turned from it to Bella.

"Here's a rum go," shouted the latter.

"What is it ?" enquired Dandredina.

"What is it ? Well, where do you live, Dandy ? Oh, excuse me ! I forgot you are hitched. Well a lot of the girls are going to take some of the new Gaiety Boys out to-night after the performance, and give them a supper;a roaring, rollicking supper,Dandy; quail, truffles, terrapin, Extra Dry, bacilli on toast, and champagne by the buckets; none of your imported trash, but genuine California dry. Are you with us Dandy ?"

Dandredina hesitated. Home, the boys and their microbes and Jack. Ah ! but Jack was red-eyed, and cross, and sullen.

And the "Gaiety Boys," so different, such smoothly shaven faces, so neatly powdered; and she had worked so hard all day, and her head wasn't just right and she needed—"I'm with you Bella," suddenly replied she, letting Jack and home care for themselves.

"Your a brick, Dandy," retorted the bach elor maid, "lets have a cocktail and take a bite in the grill room."

And linking her arm in that of Dandredina they went out of the room together.

And it was Christmas Eve.

Leaflet The Third.

Early, on the Christmas morning of the year of grace, 1949, Dandredina went off her electric wheel at the front entrance of the Megatherium apartments, and with rather unsteady legs made her way to the elevator. She managed to get into the car, and in two seconds was shot up to her floor.

Pressing her electric latch key to the door of her apartments she entered them.

Reaching the bedroom she pushed open the door, and there was confronted by a sight which instantly sobered her, and froze the very marrow in her bones.

In the crib lay the bodies of the three little electric-born boys. They were dead.

At the side of the crib, was Jack, poor Jack, in a deadly swoon.

While playing leap-frog in the corner were the two microbes.

Rousing herself, and then resuscitating Jack with a dram of Absinthe, she lifted him to his feet.

"The boys, Jack, speak, how did it happen ? Speak man, I tell you !" hoarsely cried Dandredina.

"They swallowed some dynamite drops," feebly replied Jack.

"Yes, Yes and——," eagerly asked Dandredina.

"And the microbes jumped on them, and they just died," weepingly replied Jack.

And their at the bedside of their darlings stood the unhappy husband and remorseful wife.

"Oh, Jack," at length said Dandredina, "my poor boy, what you must have suffered, and all alone, too."

"Yes, Dandredina, and it was Christmas Eve."

The learned Advocate learned her lesson.

It was a bitter one.

As she stood before the crematory the next day, and saw the triple remains of her darlings incinerated, a new resolve to lead a better, a purer and a more domestic life entered her soul.

And as for Jack, he shaved and was the same handsome, radiant fellow he always had been.

L'ENVOI.

I awoke and found Mrs. Woolet asleep in the armchair and Septimus making the cat's fur emit sparks by the aid of his home-made electric machine.

"Christmas Eve, 1949" mused I. Well perhaps the lesson is a good one for husbands of fifty years before that time to read and ponder over.

THE NOVEL SEPTIMUS WROTE.

My son, Septimus Henricus, so named after an Athenian philosopher, although but eleven years old, has already devoted considerable attention to literature.

He writes by stealth, and is so modest, (a paternal trait of character), that we only discover his work by accident.

Mrs. Woolet the other day, found a manuscrip written by Septimus, which is so bright and remarkable a literary production by a boy of his tender years, that I herewith present the same to my readers, as a fair specimen of what young America can do in the way of revelling in a riotous imagination.

In judging this work pray remember that Septimus is only eleven years of age, and had no incentive of a hundred dollar premium.

The novelette, for such we found it on inspection to be, is as follows:

THE POISONED POSTAGE STAMP,

— or —

The Doeful Dude of Devonshire.

——I——

'Twas night !

A wild night 'twas ! !

The sobbing, sighing, soughing wind swept over the bleak marshes, through the forests, and howled with a fiendish, frantic, forsaken frenzy, that boded ill to the ill-starred 'ills of Devonshire.

Donald Dorchester, Duke of Dittimus, surnamed the Doleful Dude of Devonshire, sat in his brown study in the manor house.

And the wind, plebeian breath of Eolus, made as great a din around the ducal residence as it did 'round the low cattage of Madge Marian, the forester's pretty daughter, in the glen beyond.

The Doleful Dude, sat in his brown study, munching candied chrysanthemums.

"Be the 'eavens !" finally exclaimed he, coughing up a peck of the saccharinated flower, which had lodged in his Pharynx, "She shall be mine. I have sworn it, and a Dorchester never turns caudal-ward on his oath."

——II——

"Father ! Father ! ! A sweet mezzo-so-

prano voice it was that uttered this filial word.

Madge Marian, the daughter, the handsome, ravishing beauty of all the Devonshire hills—the belle of the county—the envy of her sex, and the dude's delight, approached her sleeping father, in the 'umble 'ome of the forester, and again exclaimed, "Father !"

The sleeping man gave no response. He only exhaled mingled fumes of gin and 'baccy from his red-lobster-like-nostrils, which loomed up from his face like a light-house by the sea.

Seeing it was impossible to awaken the sleeper by ordinary means, the delicate, fragile girl, took a long, sharp darning-needle, and inserted it as far she could in the veal part of the old man's leg.

The father awoke.

And smilingly said, "Ah there ! Bless you me che-ild; me bee-youtiful daughter; come to me arms." And she came.

And the wind played a threnody without.

——III——

Donald Dorchester was rejected.

Donald Dorchester, the Doleful Dude of

Devonshire was the rejectee. Madge Marian was the rejector.

"S'death," was all he said.

The maiden only smiled.

——IV——

The Duke sat in his brown study. On a table before him was a bottle labeled "Prussic Acid;" also a Postage Stamp.

With a fiendish, ghoulish glare he soaked the inoffensive stamp in the poison.

He soaked it long, and soaked it well. He then dried it carefully.

That Postage Stamp was enclosed in a note directed to Madge Marian, requesting another interview, and an answer by return of mail.

"Ha, Ha, Ha !" was all the rejected suitor said. And the zephyrs without re-echoed his laughter.

——V——

The clock struck one in the belfry-tower.

And the Royal Mail Cart paused before Madge's door.

"A letter for me ?" artlessly enquired she, as the postman delivered the missive.

She took the fatal letter into the precincts, the sacred precincts of her home.

She opened it, (the letter) and read.

Her face flushed with a royal flush. She tossed the letter to the ground. The fatal stamp fluttered to the ground also.

Her beautiful innocent Angora cat pounced upon it, and in a thrice swallowed it.

The unfortunate feline in a moment thereafter, with a howl of agony, flew through the opened lattice and disappeared.

And that cat never came back.

The maiden sat on a settee 'neath the spacious fire-place. Her father sat opposite to her in his capacious chair, emitting the old, familiar fumes and resonant snores.

And all was peace and serenity in this 'appy, 'umble 'home.

——VI——

The Doleful Dude married an American Heiress.

A just and terrible fate was his.

And the wind keeps on a soughing.

MR. WOOLE'TS SECOND CHRISTMAS STORY.

"Neath the Shadows of the Dom."

In the quaint old city of Cologne, and in its Hohestrasse, branching out from the Domplatz, 'neath the shadows of the Dom, is located a little toy shop.

It is a quaint little shop, with the name of Dusel over the door, and filled with quaint old toys as well as modern gim-cracks.

But the quaintest of all the articles to be found in this bazaar, is the proprietor, a little lady over whose whitened head some sixty winters have passed, and to whom came many years ago that great affliction, the loss of her sight.

You would never believe that old Fraulein Dusel was blind as you watched her move about the little shop, attending to customers, assorting her stock, wrapping up articles purchased, and making change.

Her lovely, beautiful face, for such indeed it was, bore the impress of great sorrow. It

was a face that was bound to attract the most casual observer, and I can see it distinctly before me now as I write of it, many thousand miles away from the Rhine-washed shores of Cologne where I saw it a year ago.

I had wandered into the little shop on Christmas Eve to buy a few articles for the child of a friend in Cologne, whom I intended visiting the next day, and I had made my purchase, paid the amount due and received my package from her wrinkled little hands without knowing that the mistress of the shop, who had served me, was blind. But as I took the parcel from her hand, she said to me in her low musical voice, "you are an American."

I must confess that this statement did not surprise me very much, because every shopkeeper in Europe can tell an American at sight—and then my German bears a decidedly American accent—so I merely smiled and replied, "You recognize the cut of my clothes, Fraulein." I am a little vain about my German, and would of course make no admission that my speech had betrayed my nativity.

"Alas sir," answered she, "I am blind."

I was about leaving the shop, but this announcement made me turn and stare at her. I fancied I had not heard aright. "Blind ?" I asked hesitatingly. "Blind," repeated she again.

"But I am greatly interested in America and Americans," she continued. "I am always glad to meet them. They are such nice honest people. I wish you a safe return to your home, sir."

I was so overcome with astonishment that I could only murmur a few words of thanks and left the shop.

It was dinner time, and I went from the blind woman's toy shop to Fischer's world-famed restaurant in the Passage, not a stone's throw away.

And there, as I ordered my dinner, I kept thinking of Fraulein Dusel, and wondered why she had referred to America.

The waiter was one of those good-natured Germans who seemed loquacious and very desirious of talking.

I broached the subject which remained uppermost in my thoughts and asked him if he knew the blind woman who kept the toy shop across the way.

"Ach ja," he replied, "everybody in Koln knows the blind Dusel, and her history is a very touching one."

"Over forty years ago, when Madelein Dusel was a young girl in her teens, her father Antoine Dusel was the leading toy manufacturer in Koln. Madelein was a beautiful, cherry-lipped, red-cheeked, flaxen-haired girl, with a form that Venus might envy; she was the belle of this section of the city and her beauty naturally attracted much attention.

"The young fellows followed her in droves. But she tossed her pretty head and said them 'nay.'

"But one day, a party of students from Bonn, you know Bonn, which lies here below us on the Rhine, visited Koln and one of them saw Madelein on the Hohestrasse, and fell plump head and ears in love with her at first sight.

He was a poor fellow; a poor student and had nothing to recommend him; he drank heavily, and heavily for a Bonn student, which means much, and he gambled too; in fact he seemed to have all the vices, and but one virtue, if such it be, and that was, he was

deucedly handsome. He was just as handsome a man as Madelein was a handsome girl, and more could not be said, I assure you.

"Madelein had refused many tempting offers of marriage. Rich men had come and laid their fortune at her feet; they even offered to marry her without a dowry, and that means very much in Germany, and especially in Koln; but she rejected them one by one. She always laughed and said that her father, who was a widower, and who had no other children, needed her yet awhile, and so the suitors formed a long procession reaching from the Hohestrasse as far as Mayence.

"But girls are queer creatures, you know, and as uncertain as the wind that blows the vane on top of the Dom, and it so happened that Madelein, who had refused every man before, turns around and falls head and ears in love with this wicked young student who came from Bonn.

"They were together very frequently after that, and the old gossips of the place shook their heads and predicted no good to come from it all.

"And then some rejected suitor, meanly and in a spirit of revenge, went to her father with the record of the young student's life, and die Heilige Marie knows it was a pretty bad one, and the old toy maker, to whom Madelein was the apple of his eye, kicked the young fellow out and forbade Madelein seeing him any more.

The interview between the father and the young lover when the rupture took place, was a very stormy one. The old toy maker minced no words in telling the young fellow what he thought of him, and the student, whose temper was also a bit spirited, talked back, and the upshot was that the lovers were parted.

On the following Christmas Eve the old toy maker was found dead in his shop, stabbed to the heart. The shop bore evidence of a bitter struggle, and in the dead man's hand was clutched a student's cap, the kind they wore at Bonn.

Mandelein was heart-broken, not only because of the cruel fate which had over-taken her father, but also because suspicion pointed to her lover as the murderer.

Search was made for the young student by

the authorities, but he had disappeared and was never found.

Madelein fell ill, and her illness affected her sight, although she did not then lose all sense of seeing; when she recovered, she continued her father's business.

And then after many years had passed away, and during the earlier part of the great war in your country, a letter came from America for Madelein, and it came to her on the anniversary of her father's death—on Christmas Eve.

It was written from the battlefield, by the comrade of her lover, the student of Bonn, and told how her lover lay dying under the stars of the Virginia skies. It told her how he loved her, and that he had continued to love her always—it explained his long silence, for it admitted his awful guilt in having slain her father. It was true that he had acted in self-defence—that he had arranged to go to America and how his love impelled him to seek one last interview with her. How his honor promptd him to ask her father's permission to see her once more, because the old man had forbidden him to see her again. How the sight of him infuriated the

old man, who attacked him knife in hand, and how it all happened,, he knew not how, but the old man fell, and he fled. How he wandered over the face of the earth, praying for death, longing for her but daring not address her with the awful shadow of her father's death hanging over him, and how he died, fighting for the American flag, breathing her name, and blessing her.

Poor Madelein—she hastened to the Dom, and there 'neath its great arches she knelt before the Mater Dolorosa and wept and prayed that death might also come to her, for her anguish was too great to bear.

Kindly hands guided her homeward. Her former illness returned, and for many weeks she hovered between life and death. She recovered. But she was blind, and that is the sad history of the poor Fraulein Dusel.

My meal was finished with the story, and as I left the restaurant with the waiter bowing his thanks, the grand chimes of Cologne's great Cathedral began to ring out their peals of glorious sound.

I passed the little toy shop, and there behind the counter sat the little, old, sightless woman; and her head was bowed in weeping.

MR. WOOLET'S THIRD CHRISTMAS STORY.

Blimber's Christmas Present.

Josiah Blimber was a bachelor.

Josiah was the chief clerk in the office of the Hugh B. Damson Company Mercantile Agency, of New York, in whose employment he had worked and toiled, baked and boiled, striven and saved, worried and slaved, for upwards of thirty years, until he had by the slow process of promotion, occasioned by death, removal and resignation of those above him in the various stages of rank in that large and powerful corporation, finally managed to occupy the aforesaid position, whilh he filled honestly and faithfully, if not brilliantly or entirely to the satisfaction of Hugh B. Damson, Esquire, the chief of the institution.

Josiah was of medium height, cadaverously fashioned, with sandy hair, forty-five years old, and without a relation in the world wherewith to bless himself.

Perhaps we should therefore call Josiah an *old* bachelor.

One day Blimber met Damson's daughter. She chanced to be a maid of uncertain age, of a very acidulated cast of countenance, with a cold-storage manner of deportment, calculated to freeze a Laplander, and with whom, strange to relate, Blimber fell smack, head over ears in love.

Miss Arabella Damson was unconscious of the sentiments she had caused to rise within the breast of Blimber, and it is safe to presume that had she known of them, they would have occasioned her the first social triumph that she had ever experienced in the course of her life; because nature had not dealt kindly with Arabella Damson; she was not goodly to look upon, nor was her face of the kind calculated to incite emotions of admiration or love in the eyes of those who delight to gaze upon the beautiful; and although so rich an heiress, as Arabella Damson was bound to be, in due course of that time when a kindly Providence would remove Hugh B. Damson, the father, to a higher and better sphere, where a man's honorable conduct below, would give him a prop-

er rating above, yet her face, manner and deportment, were a combination which even the hardiest fortune-hunter could not work up against, and so she had remained unaddressed, uncalled for, unclaimed, and unsought by any person of the opposite sex.

Let it not be imagined that this had escaped the consideration of Damson. Damson felt the non-marriage of his daughter keenly, but he was a proud man and had a haughty spirit; a spirit befitting the man who was able to make credits, either cheap or dear, as he saw fit, and his sorrow in this particular remained with him.

Blimber walked around after his first sight of Miss Damson, in a sort of a tremulous, dreamy fashion; he did not neglect his work, but at night as he sought the repose of his couch, in the Harlem boarding house which sheltered him, he would close his eyes—would this same Blimber—and he would conjure up visions of a happy home, a palatial residence, gorgeously furnished with the Damson money, and he, entertaining his clerks, and subordinates and commercial acquaintances in right royal style.

But these were only dreams, alas, and after

dreaming them and enjoying the pleasure of having them appear as realities, he always woke up; and the waking was far less pleasant to Blimber than the going to sleep.

The more Blimber pondered upon the situation, the more he realized the necessity for displaying a Napoleonic skill of strategy, in winning the favor of the elder Damson, and the charming Arabella at one and the same time.

But how ? That was the rub. He prayed and hoped that some Sunday afternoon when he was strolling in the park, that the Damson horses attached to the Damson brougham, might take fright and run away; and that he might jump up and manage to stop the horses and save the lives of Damson and his daughetr; and then he portrayed unto himself the tableau of Damson handing the blushing Arabella over to him and exclaiming, "Bless you, Blimber, her life belongs to you," or some such words to some such effect; but Blimber was not a very strong man; his athletic training had been sadly neglected; and he reflected on the other hand, that a few well directed kicks of a team of frightened and struggling horses, might

furnish the Damson Mercantile Agency employees with an opportunity of contributing ten cents apiece for the purchase of a handsome mourning wreath, marked "Peace to his ashes," or what might be more literally true, "Peace to his pieces."

Philosophers and ethical writers have told us, however, that opportunities come in time to those who patiently wait for them, and so the opportunity came to Blimber, and he arose to the occasion and profited accordingly.

One day, the elder Damson sent for Blimber, who rushed into the presence of his chief, and with a modest demeanor of respectful attention, awaited his commands.

"Blimber," said Mr. Damson, "We must extend our work in view of the possible addition to the territory of the United States, in the direction of Cuba and Porto Rico. Do you speak Spanish ?"

Now it so happened that Blimber had learned the Spanish language at an early stage of his career, and so he was enabled to reply truthfully that he *was* familiar with the Spanish language.

"Very good, Mr. Blimber," said Mr. Dam-

son, "I want you to proceed at once to Havana; make that city your headquarters; employ whatever local clerical aid is necessary, and forward your copy for the reference book for Cuba and Porto Rico at the earliest period possible. We must by all means get ahead of the Gowin & Wynne Agency, and if you succeed in doing this work properly, I will not forget it; in fact I will appreciate it."

Blimber bowed and retired from the august presence, and proceeded to make preparation for his departure.

In due course of time he found himself in the City of Havana, and opened his headquarters in that city, and went to work. Blimber worked faithfully and arduously for fully six months, and had everything ready for publication, covering the whole islands of Cuba and Porto Rico, and was about forwarding his matter to New York to have the same put in print, when for once in his life, a brilliant thought struck his brain.

The thought came to him in connection with the thought of Arabella; distance had only given enchantment to his view of his employer's daughter, and many a night he

had sat on the veranda of his Havana boarding house, silently smoking and deeply cogitating upon the means and expedients he might successfully employ in earning the gratitude of Damson and the love of Arabella.

He knew that the Gowin & Wynne Agency might possibly be guilty of plagiarizing his work, but the mere assertion that they were guilty of such an immoral piece of business conduct, as well as of infringing upon the Damson Mercantile Agency copyright, would have to be supported by very clear evidence.

Blimber went to bed that night with the idea working in his head; and he dreamed of Damson, of the new agency reference book, of Arabella, of a wedding at Grace Church, of a great reception in the Damson mansion on Upper Fifth Avenue, where six hundred fashionably dressed men and women, were tearing the clothes off each other's backs, in a wild foot-ball rush for the supper room; buffet supper, lemonade, sandwiches, salad, Tortoni and some bon-bons, and then a bridal tour to Europe; of an open letter of credit and of a thousand and one pleasant

things; and then, lo, here came the disturbing spectre of the Gowin & Wynne Agency superintendent, an ogre-like monster, who came along with a big broom and swept everything away, out of sight, and far from him; but at last Blimber found repose and slept the sleep of peaceful innocence, and in the morning he arose and went to his office, and there put into operation a very neat and a very complete plan.

Blimber invented a new geographical addition to the Island of Cuba, situate in the Vuelta Abajo District.

He gave it the euphonious name of Villa Del Sonora; he gave it a population of four thousand souls, and then he proceeded to populate the Villa Del Sonora with different Garcias, Honradez, Posedas, Colorados, Maduros, Partagas, Fumars, Gonsalez, with a few common-place French and German names of Espirito, Boulanger, Mercier, Villiers, Schmidt, Braun and Hoffnung. He gave to each a line of business; he gave to each a capital, and he gave to each a rating, and then he sent forward his manuscript to New York, wound up his affairs, closed his office, and followed his report home.

On reaching his office, he reported to Mr. Damson, but kept his own wise counsel as to the creation by him of the new city of Villa Del Sonora; and for many reasons of prudence, chief among which was the one important one, that the elder Damson would probably not appreciate the fabrication of false evidence in his new book of reports covering the two islands, and if the rival agency should fail to plagarize, then Blimber would certainly find himself to be very much in disfavor and very much in the *potage*, as they say in France.

The Hugh B. Damson Mercantile Agency reference book was duly copyrighted, duly published and duly placed upon the markets of the world, and inside of two weeks, that is to say, as rapidly as printers and bookbinders could turn out the work in a completed form, the rival Gowin & Wynne Commercial Agency appeared with their "Original Reference Book of the Islands of Cuba and Porto Rico," which they offered to *their* subscribers at a price much below the price charged by the Damson concern, as indeed they well could afford to do, in view of the saving by

them of the great expense of collecting the information and tabulating it.

The elder Damson, was, of course, furious when the other book came to his notice, and he summoned Blimber into his presence and showed him the rival work, and said to him: "Blimber, there must have been a leak in your office at Havana; here are these scoundrels, who have copied your work verbatim; they are pirates, cut-throats and everything that is wicked. But it becomes necessary to prove their wickedness, and to establish the fact that they have infringed our copyright, by imitating our work. How can it be done? And how do you know but that duplicate records were made by your assistants?"

The hour of Blimber's triumph was at hand; he said, "Mr. Damson, will you permit me to look at the book?"

The book was handed to him, and he turned over its pages, and there in its proper place appeared the new city of Villa Del Sonora, with the complete list of Garcias, Honradez, Posedas, Colorados, Maduros, Partagas, Fumars, Consalez, Espirito, Boulanger, Mercier, Villiers, Schmidt, etc.

There they were; every name, every line of business, every amout exactly as it had come from the coinage of Blimber's brain.

It was too good; Blimber forgot his usual respectful decorum, and sat down in a chair in the presence of his startled chief, and gave vent to a loud peal of laughter, which resembled the triumphant cackling of a hen depositing its first egg in the barnyard.

"Mr. Blimber," said Damson, severely, "I do not quite understand your ill-timed jocularity; this is no laughing matter for me, and I am very sorry to see that you do not appreciate the importance of this matter; we have expended a very large sum of money, and here find all our efforts nullified by the action of our rivals. What do you mean, sir, by thus laughing at what is to me a very costly and miserable situation ?"

And then Blimber arose and disclosed his plot to his astonished chief, who listened, and then smiled, and then arose from his chair in turn, and grasped Blimber by the hand and said, "Blimber, you are a genius; Blimber, this is simply great; Blimber, this is the best thing that ever happened in the history of any commercial community;

Blimber, there is nothing within my power that I will not do for you, and there is nothing in reason that you can ask for me, that I will not freely give; Blimber, this is too rich, and for the first time in all these long years I have secured a grasp on the hair of the Gowin & Wynne people, which I will pull to my most complete satisfaction."

On the twenty-fourth day of December, the Gowin & Wynne Company, through their counsel, settled the claim of damages in the copyright infringement suit instituted by the Hugh B. Damson Commercial Agency Company, by handing over a check for one hundred thousand dollars, delivering all the plates and copies of the piratical edition of their work on hand for purposes of destruction, and signed a public statement confessing their misdeeds and promising never to offend again.

Damson's triumph was complete, and in the afternoon he called Mr. Blimber into his private office, and said: "Blimber, I want you to come to my house to-night, and dine with us; this will be the jolliest Christmas Eve that I have ever experienced in the whole course of my life, and I want you with us,"

and Blimber bowed his head assentingly, but said nothing.

On that evening, Mr. Blimber put his stumpy legs under the polished mahogany of Mr. Damson's dining table, and was cordially received by Mrs. Damson, and especially by Miss Arabella Damson, who seemed to have heard all about the wonderful *coup* that Mr. Blimber had wrought in the great business of the Damson Commercial Agency, and being her father's daughter, admired the man who had succeeded so well; and they ate and drank and made merry; and after the ladies had retired, Damson turned to Blimber and said to him, his heart mellow and generous with the good wine they had imbibed, "Now, my dear boy, what can I do for you; speak, don't be afraid, tell me what you need, and what you desire, and it shall be yours."

And Blimber said nothing; and thereupon Damson once more said: "This is Christmas Eve you know, Blimber, and I want to make you a Christmas gift, which will be agreeable to you; just tell me what you would like to have, and I will provide it for you."

And then Blimber got up and for once,

with the eloquence of love, told his passion, and said to his chief that the only Christmas gift that would be acceptable to him would be the hand of his fair, handsome, accomplished and lovely daughter.

And then Damson's heart overflowed with joy and he nearly fell under the table in a state of collapse, because it only needed the marriage of his daughter to make his happiness complete. He sent for his daughter, and dutifully she came, and thereupon he said unto her: "Arabella, Mr. Blimber has something to say to you; what he will say to you meets with my fullest approbation and consent." And thereupon old Damson skipped out of the room as gaily as the first-ling of the flock; yes, even like a sportive lamb.

And then Blimber not having fully exhausted his eloquence, told his love; told Arabella how the very grand work he had been able to accomplish was entirely due to her; (clever stroke that of Blimber, giving her the credit of it all); that she had been his inspiration, his lode-star, and the incitement of all his work and ambition in life; and the blushing Arabella accepted him; then they

ascended hand in hand to the library where they were received by Damson and his good wife, who kissed them and blessed them; and to fill up the measure of Blimber's happiness, Damson led him to the Christmas tree, which stood in the bay-window of the large room, all aglow with glittering lights, and took therefrom an envelope which bore the superscription of his name, and he handed it to him, and said "Blimber, this is yours." And Blimber opened the envelope, and lo, and behold it was a cheque to his order for fifty thousand dollars, being one-half of the damages recovered from the Gowin & Wynne Commercial Agency, through the medium of his magnificent piece of strategy, and there he was a rich man and a happy man; and let us anticipate by here saying that he became the successor to Damson, when Damson was some years therafter laid to rest with his fathers.

Nor must I forget to mention that on that same Christmas Eve, as Blimber was about saying farewell, and leaving the house for the night, Damson escorted him to the front door, and holding on to his hand, said to him, "Blimber, my boy, confound it, that was the

finest piece of work ever done in this country, or egad, in any other country. Now you have got my daughter, and you have got half the damages, I only make one condition, and that is, after you are married, when you take your bridal tour, you must both spend a few days in the magnificent new city of Villa Del Sonora, in the Vuelta Abajo District of Cuba, hey, Blimber !" And here Damson chuckled and laughed, and poked Blimber in the ribs, and laughed some more until the rich oleaginous tears of joy ran down his cheeks.

And Blimber returned the pressure of Damson's hand, and also chuckled, as he merely said, "Good-night, sir."

And Blimber went out into the frosty night and looked up at the wintry heavens, and all the stars semed winking at him; and the wind seemed to whistle a jolly tune into his ear, and Blimber simply and softly said unto himself, as he boarded an up-town car for Harlem, "Not so worse."

THE END.